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'Explore the exciting Pinoy gaming life in the first-ever issue of 2bU! Sports'
LIFESTYLE / C1

Federer, Roddick forge US Open quarterfinal duel
SPORTS / A20

Kobe Bryant is in Manila
LIFESTYLE / D1

P75-M project bleeds coffers of RP's biggest power co-op
ACROSS / A16

PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS

PARADISE IN PALAWAN
Clear waters and pristine sands await visitors to the cay island of Pangalcoran in El Nido, Palawan

Abalos impeachment eyed

Cabinet exec's testimony deemed crucial

By Christian V. Esguerra and Beverly T. Mendoza

A GROUP OF LAWMAKERS IN THE House of Representatives has begun the groundwork for the filing of an impeachment complaint against Benjamin Abalos Sr., chair of the Commission on Elections accused of brokering the $329-million contract for the national broadband network (NBN) project won by China's ZTE Corp.

The lawmakers are considering the testimony of a Cabinet official who might be able to pin Abalos.

Deputy Minority Leader Rico Haresco yesterday said the lawmakers had started communicating with the Cabinet official, who was supposedly privy to the NBN deal.

"We will try to get this Cabinet official for the impeachment case we are building," said Haresco, a representative of the party-list group 1-Bicol.

Haresco, the minority's spokesperson on

ABALOS, A4

YOU'VE GOT TO BE KIDDING. President Macapagal-Arroyo appears incredulous as Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita, holding a CD, murmurs a few private words in her ear at the start of the National Security Council/Cabinet Group meeting in Malacañang on Tuesday.

₱2 trillion worth of IT projects in the pipeline

By Tony S. Bergonia

THE CONTROVERSIAL NATIONAL BROADBAND Network (NBN) and Cyber Education Project (CEP) would sink the country deeper in debt because the government already owns other broadband networks and IT (information and communication technology (ICT) projects that have a combined cost of more than ₱2 trillion.

Most of the funds for the ongoing and proposed projects came or will come from foreign loans, a government listing showed.

Two of the projects are broadband networks that the government already owns—the Philip-

PROJECTS, A4

Top official confirms gov't eyeing Erap pardon

By Michael Lim Ubac and Christine O. Avendaño

THE NEW POLITICAL ADVISER of President Macapagal-Arroyo thinks that a pardon for her disgraced predecessor is not forthcoming.

Asked by the business if a pardon was in the offing for ousted President Joseph Estrada, Interior Secretary Ronaldo Puno said: "I think it's no secret that the President right now is seeking a greater national reconciliation. In the more we are able to bring everybody together, the better for everybody."

Puno's diplomatic response seemed bewildering. Sen. Miriam Defensor Santiago, head of the influential El Shaddai, criticized the government for what he described as the "semi-kill" in the preparations for the Sandiganbayan verdict in the plunder case against Estrada.

"The preparation of the government for the day of judgment is

TOP OFFICIAL, A4

SIDE DRAMA. Sen. Miguel Zubiri greets Sen. Manuel Pimentel and gets a pat on his cheek in return at the Bishops-Legislators caucus in Makati City on Tuesday. Zubiri defeated Pimentel's son in the 12th slot in the 2007 senatorial elections. In the ground is Sen. Loren Legarda.

Gov't seeking .5M hectares for agri-biz deal with China

By TJ Burgonio and Christian V. Esguerra

THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE (DA) yesterday announced that it was looking at 400,000 to 500,000 hectares of land for agribusiness development under a memorandum of understanding (MOU) signed with China in January.

Agriculture Undersecretary Narciso Nieto told reporters that the areas targeted were those that had

GOV'T SEEKING, A4

GMA to bring top businessmen to Sydney

By Julie Luking-Javellana

PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-ARROYO will leave tomorrow for Australia to join US President George W. Bush at the annual summit of the 21 member Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (Apec).

Malacañang has not confirmed whether Mrs. Arroyo will have a meeting with Bush on the sidelines of the Apec summit in Sydney on Saturday and Sunday.

But such "pull-aside" meetings have been traditionally done by the heads of state gathered to one venue.

Mrs. Arroyo had earlier said she would meet with Malaysian Prime Minister Abdullah Badawi during the Apec event to discuss the resumption of peace talks with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front, which Malaysia hosts.

The President, along with her husband Jose Miguel Arroyo, is scheduled to leave for Sydney tomorrow morning on a chartered flight. It will be Mike Arroyo's first overseas trip since he survived dangerous open heart surgery in April.

Key members of Mrs. Arroyo's Cabi-

GMA TO BRING, A4

No fierce fighting, just fresh fruits in Sulu

By Artyn-Joss Cruz

JOLO, SULU—IN WHAT MAY BE A FEINT in the history of Sulu, a Philippine Air Force cargo plane won't be bringing in more soldiers for war on sentient: the bodies of soldiers slain in encounters with bandits.

On orders of President Macapagal-Arroyo, the C-130 will embark on a mission here on Sept. 10 to pick up farmers' produce in what Gen. Abdulrakhar Tan described as a "symbolic act of humanitarian assistance."

"It is not really part of the implementation

NO FIERCE, A4

BUMPER. Jolo has P15 capiz-a-day women jobs. In Marcos Manila, it costs at least P1.2B.

Men go for good looks; women pick security

CHICAGO—THE FACE OF DATING MAY have changed through the years, but the laws of attraction have remained the same since the days of Sir Neanderthal, a study released Tuesday suggests.

MEN GO, A4

Beliefs, not money, behind Couples split

By Beverly T. Mendoza

MONEY WAS NOT THE PROBLEM, some of the split that rendered Couples for Christ (CFC), one of the Catholic Church's largest lay movements worldwide, according to a member of the CFC International Council.

Joe Tale, who also chairs Gawad

BELIEFS, A17

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WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: The whole country and vicinities will be cloudy to at times rainy area with isolated thunderstorms or thundershowers.

Metro Manila	Partly cloudy	Iloilo City	Partly cloudy
Baguio	Partly cloudy	Bacolod	Partly cloudy
Tuguegarao	Partly cloudy	Cebu	Partly cloudy
Laoag	Partly cloudy	Tacloban	Partly cloudy
Clark Field	Partly cloudy	Dipolog	Partly cloudy
Legazpi	Partly cloudy	Zamboanga	Partly cloudy
Virac	Partly cloudy	Davao	Partly cloudy
Catarman	Partly cloudy	Cotabato	Partly cloudy
Calapan	Partly cloudy	Surigao	Partly cloudy

Weather forecast by Pagasa, accuweather.com and AP

Marine debacles to be probed

By Miko Dizon

DOLDOLVINO

THE MILITARY HAS LAUNCHED an inquiry that would separately look into the deaths of Marine soldiers during clashes last July 10 and Aug. 18 in Basilan that left 20 Marines dead, including 10 who were beheaded, allegedly by Abu Sayyaf terrorists.

The inquiry will investigate possible errors in command that led to some of the Armed Forces' biggest losses in recent years, the new Muslim commander Maj. Gen. Benjamin Dolfuso told reporters yesterday.

"We have created two boards of inquiry to look into the recent encounters. The primary consideration here is that we will learn from our experience," Dolfuso said.

Dolfuso said the board that will investigate the ambush on July 10 that left 14 Marines dead, 10 of them beheaded, has already been created. It will be led by the chief of staff, Lt. Eugenio Clemente.

A second panel that will investigate another ambush clash on Aug. 18 that left 15 soldiers dead, including five young Scoutmasters, has yet to be formed, he said.

The inquiry will look into how the Marines operated in the two encounters with the separatist Moro Islamic liberation Front and the Abu Sayyaf and determine the errors, lapses and failures that led to the high death toll.

Most of the ground officers involved have already been relieved of their posts, including the then Marine chief in the area. The panels are not supposed to recommend that any charges be filed.

The two incidents were part of stepped-up military offensives against the Abu Sayyaf, a Muslim extremist group blamed for the country's worst terrorist attacks.

On Aug. 9, 26 soldiers and a civilian were killed in a clash between soldiers and the Abu Sayyaf on Jolo Island, south of Basilan.

The Isnaji-forced Peninsula Macapagal Arroyo to launch a major offensive in Basilan and Jolo that has now displaced nearly 25,000 residents of Basilan alone.

The joint work has now a lull to the fighting, Dolfuso said, adding the military had been ordered to focus on "surgical" strikes that would not endanger civilians.

Dolfuso said he had instructed the troops to "be decisive in the conduct of our operations. Do not just push the enemy but corner them."

Dolfuso's is on to fly to Basilan tomorrow to visit the four Marine battalions deployed there.

He said he was going to Basilan not just to check on the soldiers' morale, but also "to give them guidance" to ensure that the Marines remain an organization that is "people-oriented, institutionally strong and operationally effective."

OIC prods RP, MNLF on 1996 peace accord

By Cynthia D. Balana

THE 57-MEMBER ORGANIZATION of the Islamic Conference (OIC) has urged the Philippine government, the Moro National Liberation Front and the OIC Committee of the Eight to find a way to remove the impediments to the full implementation of the peace accord signed on 1996 by the government and the MNLF.

In a statement on the occasion of the 12th anniversary of the accord's signing, the OIC also called for greater governmental effort in bringing peace and stability to the southern Philippines.

OIC secretary general Ekmeleddin Ihsanoglu of Indonesia praised the government and the MNLF for signing the peace accord on Sept. 2, 1996, to end a 25-year-old conflict.

The agreement provided for the creation of the autonomous Region for Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) that now runs Mindanao's Muslim-dominated provinces as its first governor.

Misuari, however, is now under house arrest facing rebellion charges for leading a short-lived uprising in Jolo in 2001 that claimed now 100 lives.

In the OIC statement, Ihsanoglu noted that "progress has not met the high expectations" from the time both parties signed the accord to implement the 1976 Tripoli Agreement.

The OIC is an influential intergovernmental organization that safeguards the interests of Muslim minority countries as well as individual Muslims all over the world. The MNLF enjoys observer status in the OIC.

Ihsanoglu said the OIC was ready to extend more assistance to address the underdevelopment and humanitarian issues in Mindanao.

But he also urged all the parties involved to "exert their earnest efforts" in converting a tripartite meeting and preserving the gains made since the peace agreement was signed.

The OIC General Secretariat in earlier directed the Committee of the Eight to monitor the implementation of the peace agreement and set a tripartite meeting among the Philippine government, the MNLF and OIC.

It said the meeting was postponed a few times because of the fighting in the southern Philippines. It said a new date for the meeting would be announced later.

JDV proposes Spratley's free-fishing corridor

SPEAKER JOSE DE VENECIA HAS proposed the establishment of a free "fishing corridor" in waters around the contested Spratley islands to avoid potential conflicts in the region.

The Speaker brought up the idea in a meeting of Members with a high-level Chinese delegation led by Chinese Defense Minister Cao Gangchuan in the House of Representatives.

"A fisheries corridor would be a great step in prevent undue arrests of fishermen from Asean (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) and China that have created tensions and hindered regional harmony," De Venecia said in a statement yesterday.

De Venecia and Chinese Defense Minister Cao Gangchuan, vice-chairman of the Central Military Commission, was receptive to the idea.

The fishing zone in the South China Sea ranks fourth among the world's 10 fishing zones in terms of total annual marketable production, according to the Otto Asian International Peace Research Institute. Norman Bordadora, Reuters

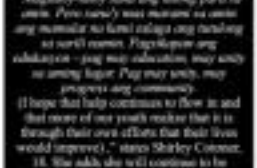
'Salamat sa Desisyon ng Korte Suprema 13-0'

'Mas buo ang loob ng kabataan ng Smokey Mountain na ipaglaban ang kinabukasan'

"Magmula-noon-noon ang tulong para sa amin. Pero nitong mga nakaraang araw naramdaman ng amin ang mga tulong ang mga tao sa mundo namin. Pagtulungan ang edukasyon—yung mga education, mga seminar ang lugar. Pag may unity, may progress ang community.

(I hope that help continues to flow in and that more of our youth realize that it is through their own efforts that their lives would improve)," states Shirley Coronel.

Mr. She adds she will continue to be guided by the discipline developed to her by the late National Artist for Dance Ramon Obusan who served as community volunteer and artist trainer for the dance group Mga Anak ni Isang Dalgdag (www.pro.smokey-one.org).



Here escape is a natural recourse, the young leaders of Smokey Mountain opt to remain and work to see more improvements in their community.

Many of them have seen many key cities of the world. They have performed as a cultural dance group to raise funds for scholarships. Asked about their dreams, they hardly speak of leaving the country for better lives. They want to stay and see more progress at Smokey Mountain.

They want their community to be recognized as a Philippine showcase of transformation – from a community of dwellers who made a living out of a huge garbage dumpsite to one of dignified living, through self-help and perseverance. They want to be known for caring for people and the environment.

They see the recent **Supreme Court** decision, which upheld the validity of the **Smokey Mountain Reclamation and Development Project** that provided them permanent homes, as a propeller of dreams, a "bonus" for their efforts.

"Para sa akin, bonus na ang Supreme Court decision. Valuable na namin ang tanap na bahay ng magkaroon ng sariling bahay ng walang sa pulgas! (I regard the SC decision as a bonus. We have long realized the benefits of having our own homes and clean surroundings)," states Andrew Macalalad, 28, Parish Youth Coordinator.

It has been nine years, starting from early 1999, since permanent homes in 21 medium-rise residential buildings were turned over to 2,520 families who were beneficiaries of the project undertaken by the **National Housing Authority** and **R-II Builders Inc.**

Andrew, who brought the Smokey Mountain stench with him to grade school, has been in Australia, US, Hong Kong and Japan with the cultural dance group and was 2000 representative to the APEC Youth Summit in Vietnam. As one of the first church scholars, he graduated with a degree in customs administration from the Philippine Maritime Institute. But he is not about to let go of community work. He still wants to see more youth volunteers give of their own selves for their community.

Palace: No postponement of barangay, SK elections

By Michael Lim Ubac

MALACAÑANG IS OPPOSED to the postponement of barangay elections scheduled for October this year.

Interior Secretary Ronaldo Puno, who has been designated presidential political adviser, said postponing the barangay and Sangguniang Kabataan elections would be illegal, as "you will now have 18 chairmen who will be 25, 26, 27 years old, in violation of the law."

There have been no elections for the local council posts, which carry a term of three years, since 2002.

The House committee on suffrage and electoral reforms, chaired by Makati Rep. Teodoro Locsin, on Monday unanimously approved a consolidated bill postponing the October 2007 simultaneous barangay and SK elections to the second Monday of May 2008. It was the first bill approved at the committee level by the 14th Congress.

Puno said Malacañang would be making representations with the different House committees that the executive branch was advising against postponement.

Budget Secretary Rolando Andaya Jr. said funding for the SK and barangay elections has already been provided for in the 2007 national budget.

Locsin said the consolidated measure was to be submitted yesterday to the committee on rules.

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Gov't seeking .5M hectares ...

From page A1

been distributed to small tillers under the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program (CARP) who have organized themselves into Agrarian Reform Communities (ARCs).

Each ARC has about 300 to 200 members in one or several barangays. The idea is to be able to function effectively like a cooperative, and receive technical and financial assistance as the cultivation of the distributed land.

Over 1,700 ARCs have been organized nationwide, but very few of those are viable and those that are successful are receiving aid from the DAR, some national financial agencies and donor governments, the biggest of which is Japan.

The ARCs are theoretically to the 4 million ha of farmland, half of those public land, distributed under CARP over the past three decades.

Around 1.5 million ha, half of those total expected lands to be given where resistance to agrarian reform is strongest, remain to be distributed under CARP's land distribution drive, which expires next year, unless the 20-year-old program is extended.

Our MOU—an agreement to provide—signed to January calls for the development of over 1 million ha of land to grow biofuel crops, rice and sorghum. "But MOU means that this land will be covered by a 25-year lease, renewable for another 25 years.

In the "reverse" clause, the MOU noted that Philippine government to "accelerating" the development of 1 million ha of new lands for agribusiness, saying that this is one of the strategic goals of the members in its development plans of the Arroyo administration.

"We're just identifying 400,000 potential areas for agribusiness, like the farmers will have the 5-and-dozens on this," Nora said.

'National betrayal'

Last week, Aiver Quezolino of the Philippine International Action for Community Enlightenment Direct Foundation accused the government of "leasing" 2 million hectares of farm lands to the Chinese for agribusiness.

"It is an act of national betrayal," said Quezolino, declaring that this would compromise the nation's food security.

Asked for comment, Agriculture Secretary Arthur Yap told the Inquirer: "I challenge anyone to show a contract saying that we're surrendering, leasing or giving away 2 million hectares to the Chinese."

But leftist groups are already up in arms, protesting the alleged "betrayal."

Around 300 protesters, demonstrating for a second straight day at the main DAR office in Quezon City yesterday demanded that the DAR drop what it said was a plan to give over 800,000 ha of farmland as to agribusiness and instead fulfill its unfinished CARP, that Agrarian Reform Secretary Nasser Pangandaman resigns and that three mid-level officials be sacked for handing these acreage as land disputes properly still determined to farmers.

Congress probe urged

Around 120 of the protesters were invited to a conference in the DAR's office, but after hours of discussions, they refused to leave, prompting officials to call the riot police to evict them.

Also yesterday, Rep. Mujiv Hataman of the Basilan of the leftist group Akbayan demanded the Chino deal, saying it smacked of the controversial Japan-Philippines Economic Partnership Agreement and the National Broadband Network project with China.

He said the deals with China "violate constitutional provisions" and that most of the Philippine corporations involved in the January MOA were "nonexistent."

Hataman filed a resolution calling for an investigation by Congress of the MOA.

A FARMER LEADER who is in frustration as she leaves the Department of Agrarian Reform building in Quezon City after Agrarian Reform Secretary Nasser Pangandaman failed to show up for a dialogue Tuesday.

ROBERT TORRES, a farmer of Kita Isola Viejo in Malaga, Hagonoy Occidental, returns in photo outside the Department of Agrarian Reform on Elliptical Road in Quezon City on Tuesday. Herson arrested and later released.

Men go for good looks; women ...

From page A1

Notwithstanding what they say they want in a mate, it seems that men still pick the most attractive women. Women, on the other hand, go for men who make the best providers—leveraging their looks among the least since they can.

That is what a group of researchers found when they observed some modern singles at work—in a speed dating session in Munich, Germany.

"Just because people say they're looking for a particular set of characteristics in a mate, someone like themselves, doesn't mean that is what they'll end up choosing," Peter M. Todd, a cognitive scientist at Indiana University in Bloomington, said in a telephone interview.

Researchers led by Todd proposed in Tuesday's edition of Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences that their study based human were similar to most other mammals, "following Darwin's principle of choosy females and competitive males, even if humans say something different."

Munich study

The study took readers by Todd and his team involved 26 men and 26 women in Munich, Germany.

The participants, whose ages ranged from 25 to their early 30s, were first asked to fill out a questionnaire about what they were looking for in a mate, listing such categories as wealth and status, family environment, physical appearance, hobbies and attractiveness.

The participants said they were looking for mirror images of themselves—someone who matched them in terms of status, commitment and looks.

The researchers, however, found a different dynamic at work when the participants were made to take part in "speed dating"—short interdays of three to seven minutes to which a man and a woman would chat, then move on to meet another member of the opposite sex.

Participants were later asked to check off the people they would like to meet again in a proper date. Dates were arranged between a man and a woman who had chosen each other.

Disparity

Speed dating allowed the researchers to look at a lot of mate choices in a short time. They were also able to compare what the participants said they were looking for with the people they actually chose to date again.

And what did the researchers find?

"There's this disparity between what people say they want in a mate and what they end up choosing," Todd said.

Men's choices did not reflect their stated preferences, the researchers concluded. The men appeared to choose the women they were to date again mainly on the basis of their physical attractiveness.

"Men go for good looks; women go for money and resources," Todd said.

Women's actual choices, like men's, did not reflect their stated preferences. The women appeared drawn to material wealth and security.

The women appeared much more calculating and picky in their choices of prospective mates than their male counterparts, the researchers found.

"Women are more interested in saving only a third of the men again, and they appeared to calibrate their choices based on how attractive they thought they were and who they could realistically expect in long.

The scientists said women were aware of the importance of their own attractiveness to men, and adjusted their expectations to select the most desirable guys.

"Women made offers to men who had overall qualities that were on par with the women's self-image of attractiveness. They didn't greatly overshoot their attractiveness," Todd said, "because part of the goal for women is to choose men who would stay with them."

But, he added, "they didn't go lower. They knew what they could get and aimed for that level."

Biological drive

Results of the study suggest that modern day singles, like prehistoric men of their ancestors, are driven by biology with men seeking the best specimens to procreate with and women seeking the best long-term partners.

"Evolutionary theories in psychology suggest that men and women should trade off different traits in each other, and when we look at the actual mate-choices people make, this is what we find evidence for," Todd said.

"Ancestral individuals who made their mate choices in this way—women valuing traits of attractiveness for higher quality men and men looking for any attractive women who will accept them—would have had an evolutionary advantage in greater numbers of successful offspring." Reports from AP and AFP

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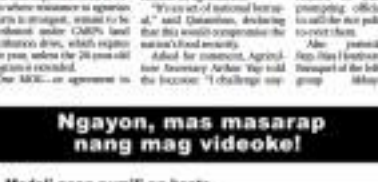

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Also English hits: Alicia Keys (Fallin'), Avril Lavigne (Complicated), Beyonce (Naughty Girl), Black Eyed Peas (Where Is the Love), Christina Aguilera (What A Girl Wants), Fantasia (Like Flames), Jewel (Hands), Jo Dee Messina (You Were Meant For Me), Michelle McLeod (Breathe), Nicole Scherzinger (Don't Know Why), Paris Hilton (Stars Are Blind), Pussycat Dolls (Don't Cha), Real Gee (Oh/Pasayaw), Sarah Geronimo (Forever), Shayne Ward (Breathless), Ms. Dawn

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No fierce fighting, just fresh fruits, in Sulu

From page A1

of Administrative Order No. 372 issued by the President ordering a humanitarian offensive in Basilan, Sulu and other areas under the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao," Teodoro Bacani said.

AO 372 classifies the ASG as terrorists—Dulo, Basilan, Maguindanao, Tawi-Tawi, Lanao del Sur and Shariff Kabunsuan—as "the poorest in the country."

Tan said the absence of any fresh encounters between the military and the this mayor, as well as other rebel groups, had paved the way for the uninterrupted harvest of fruits.

Marketing problem

But one problem cropped up: where to market the bounty aside from nearby Zamboanga City.

Bringing the produce to Metro Manila on a C-130 plane, Tan noted, would not often be picked up from a remote spot of Sen. Richard Gordon to Sulu.

The senator, he said, "urged him to actively market the fruits harvested in Sulu" by seeking the assistance of the Department of Trade and Industry.

Gordon, in an Aug. 20 letter to Ms Arroyo, made a formal recommendation. "The produce is very cheap and DTI can help market the products of Sulu at better prices," he said.

Cheap fruits

The streets of downtown Jolo are flooded by a seeming oversupply of durian, mangosteen and lanzones. A bunch of mangosteen that weighs almost one kilo costs only P30; it costs more than P200 in Metro Manila.

Lanzones are sold in 5-kilo batches at only P65. In Zamboanga, the same fruit is sold at P20-P30 a kilo.

Durian fruits assigned in droves can be bought at a bargain price of P15-P20, depending on size. Its fruit stands in Sivantilla, San Francisco and elsewhere in Metro Manila, they cost from P120 to P180 apiece.

Tan said on the DTI main office in Makati City to seek assistance in marketing the produce to be sold-off from Sulu by the C-130 plane.

The "humanitarian offensive" ordered by Ms Arroyo, according to the governor, indicated that the area not placed under martial law in the province. Her parallel instructions to all Cabinet officials is an "all-out development offensive" to Sulu and Basilan.

"Finally, you in Metro Manila will get to taste just how sweet and delicious our durian, mangosteen and lanzones," he said.

DURIAN for sale in downtown Jolo

Correction

In the SEPT. 4 issue, a photo caption on Page A2—"Get your jobs here"—contained the description of the person shown on the extreme right of the photograph. Enrique Salva is the chief of the Makati Public Information Office of the Department of Labor and Employment—not the Philippine Daily Inquirer.

• • •

Readers may send their requests for correction of factual errors in articles in the Day Desk, Philippine Daily Inquirer, 7th Floor, Media Center, Chino Roces Avenue Extension, Makati City; fax this: 897-8710/897-8099; e-mail address dayde@inquirer.com.ph.

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Car plates won't fit Jonas puzzle

By Ricardo Paya

POLICE INVESTIGATORS SAY they are puzzled over how the military vehicle of a reputedly involved in the abduction of activist Jonas Burgos—later traced to a coup-plotted outfit—could suggest military involvement in the kidnapping when the evidence pointed to unmarked vehicles as being responsible.

Senior Supt. Joel Coronel of the Criminal Investigation Detection Group (CIDG) said the testimony provided by Emerito Lipio, an admitted former New People's Army rebel-turned-civilian asset of the abduction, was "logical and coherent" pieces of the abduction.

"His statements are consistent with what other witnesses have told us before. We now know what Jonas was doing in the mall at the time he was abducted. He was there to meet with members of the movement," Coronel said yesterday.

He said investigators are trying to establish the link between the license plates and the statements of Lipio who testified that SPA members snatched Burgos from the Pure Gemara mall in Baliwag, Quezon City last April 28.

'Really puzzling'

Coronel said he found the it some pieces might that worked to link the military to the Burgos abduction "really puzzling."

Earlier, police investigators traced the license plates (TMF-394) of a Toyota Revo used in the abduction to an Isuzu vehicle parked inside the headquarters of the 56th Infantry Battalion in Binangonan, Rizal.

Soldiers and officers from the military unit claimed the license plates had been stolen.

Last week, the CIDG presented Lipio to the media. Lipio claimed to have witnessed the kidnapping as he had been by an SPA leader named Emilio Ac Ocampo in a Isuzu Crosswind sport utility vehicle (SUV) registered to a military spy.

He said he recognized two of Burgos' kidnappers as members of the SPA.

Marlon Manuel and Melvin Reyes, who were also presented to media, corroborated Lipio's statements.

In the search for more witnesses, Coronel said they would interview former members of the SPA, rebel returnees and sympathizers who might shed light on the case.

Resulting to statements made by Jonas' mother, Edita Burgos, that Lipio was being used to deliver messages from the detachment of the military, Coronel said Lipio was neither warned nor initiated to give his testimony.

On allegations that Lipio was under the custody of the military as he was arrested last year, Coronel said Lipio told him that he was released a day after his arrest and has been hiding out at his brother's house in Rizal.

On reports that De Guzman was arrested by the military earlier this year and remains in military custody, Coronel said that the field in De Guzman arrested last year was actually Rafael Cruz alias Ka Boy, Ka Ernesto and Ka Dang, former chief of the CPP in Bulacan.

GMA set to match Marcos record on infra

By Michael Lim Ubac

IF THE TIME PRESident Macapagal-Arroyo steps down in 2010, her administration's infrastructure spending would rival the record of the late strongman Ferdinand Marcos' New Society.

Pitch the country's economy growing at its fastest annual pace in 20 years, the President on Wednesday vowed to build more roads, repair dams and complete other infrastructure projects that would put the country on the road to First World status.

The 20-year Philippine development (series) cut the most extensive infrastructure projects ever launched, financed by deficit spending and foreign borrowing.

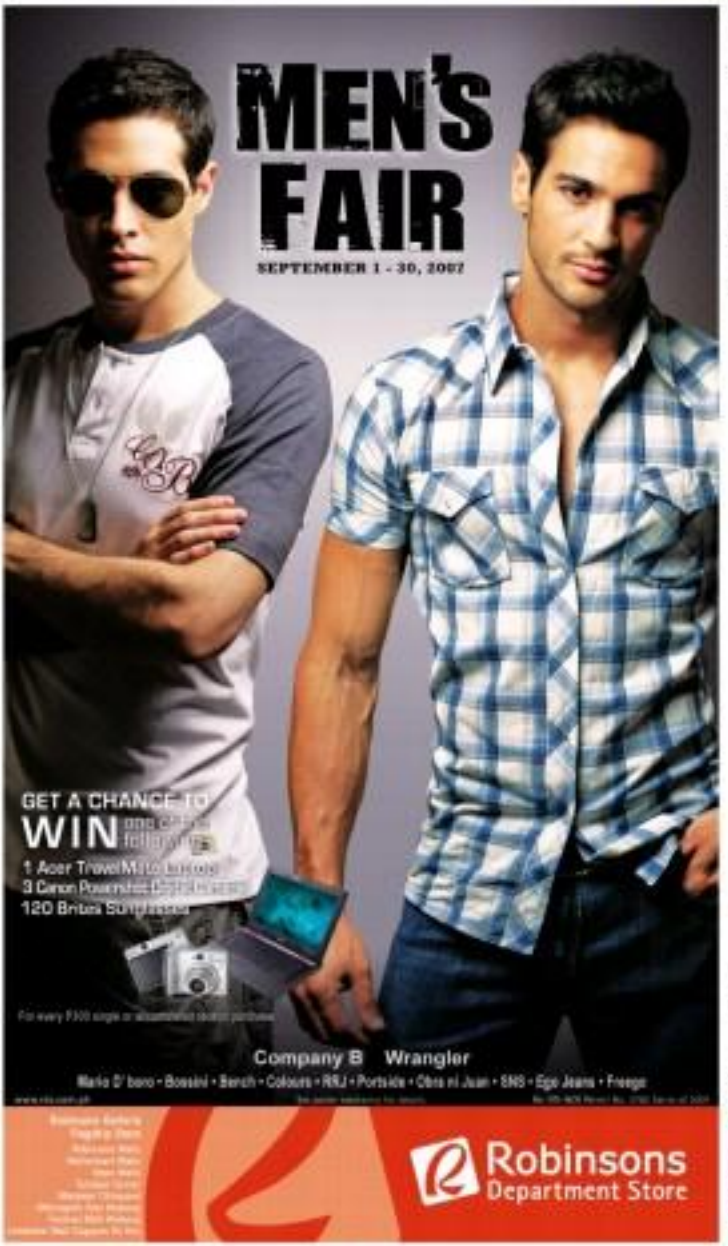
Ms Arroyo said her administration would pour more money—P15 billion—to boost the agricultural sector.

In a speech at the inauguration of the Pulo irrigation project in Pulaym City, Nueva Ecija, the President said P6 billion was meant primarily go to irrigation and another P5 billion for the construction of farm-to-market roads next year.

She said that she had already asked Congress to increase the budget of the agriculture department, so that it can build 3,000 km of rural roads and repair irrigation systems to benefit 1,000 farmlands.

"Kukulitan di lamakaw ni sendiya ang gamitang mga kapapang ramiran, dinan ng karaniwang magsasaka. Kaya nanaw na ito [kami] upang sa [ulit] ang mga programa at ilyapa ng [aming] at Ambalang Ambal Ilocandia like this for the farmer are not usually covered by media. That is why we are here to discuss the benefits of projects like irrigation and the building of rural roads," Ms Arroyo said.

She said that due to the economic reforms she had instituted, the government had enough funds to allow the benefits of a strong economy such as down to millions of Filipinos.



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By Leila B. Salaverria

REVERSING ITS EARLIER RULING, THE Supreme Court has ordered the dismissal of the graft case against the former chair and president of Philippine International Air Terminals Co. Inc. (PIATCO) in connection with the ruinous contract to build Ninoy Aquino International Airport Terminal 3.

The high tribunal, in directing the Sandiganbayan to withdraw the criminal case, said there is no way charges under the wrong provision of the Anti-Graft and Corrupt Practices Act or Republic Act No. 3019.

Go and former Transportation and Communications Secretary Vicente Rivera were accused of conspiring with one another to enter into a lease contract for the construction of Naia Terminal 3, which was subsequently nullified by the Supreme Court for being disadvantageous to the government.

The case against Go was filed by Anti-Graft and Corrupt Practices Act, one of the three cited laws before the reversal.

The high court, in an April 13 decision, had dismissed Go's petition seeking a reversal of the Sandiganbayan ruling that junked his motion to quash the graft case against him.

Go then filed a motion for reconsideration, which was granted on Sept. 3.

In his resolution, the court explained that Go was charged with violating Section 3(g) of RA 3019, which penalizes public officials who enter into contracts disadvantageous to the government.

It said the provision applied only to public officials, and Go should have been charged under another provision that penalizes private individuals who are public officials to enter into grossly disadvantageous contracts.

"In other words, notwithstanding the allegation of a conspiracy to violate Section 3(g), the liability of private individuals who participated in the transaction must be established under the appropriate provision which is Section 3(f), for knowingly inducing or causing the public officials to commit Section 3(g) where criminal intent must necessarily be proved," the high court said.

Associate Justice Consuelo Ynares-Santiago penned the resolution for the Special Third Division. Justices Adolfo Azcuna and Cancio Garcia concurred with it. Justice Minita Alicia Asuncion-Martinez and Hilario Clave Sr. Santos dissented. Santiago had dissented with the April 13 decision, which was written by Justice Romeo Callejo who has since retired.

The Supreme Court said that in ordering the dismissal of the graft case against Go, it was not ruling on his guilt or innocence or prescribing the case, since RA 3019 penalizes private individuals under Section 3.

"It is well-settled that penal statutes are strictly construed against the State and liberally for the accused, so much so that the scope of a penal statute cannot be extended by good intention or by implication," the court said.

In her dissenting opinion, Martinez said private individuals could still be charged under Section 3 of the antigraft law as had been done in earlier cases.

"The Court had consistently held that private individuals, when conspiring with public officials, may be found guilty of offenses under Section 3, even though one of the elements of the offense is that the accused is a public official," she said.

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High court junks Erap plea to cite gov for contempt

By Leila B. Salaverria

EVARDONE

THE SUPREME COURT HAS dismissed the petition of deposed President Joseph Estrada and the Puwersa ng Masang Pilipino (PMP) party to cite Ramiro Ramas Gutierrez Evardone for contempt of court for saying that retired Chief Justice Artemio Panganiban would run with the opposition for a Senate seat in the May 2007 polls.

According to the high court, Evardone was not being contemptuous in Evardone's statement, published in the Internet, even if it was uttered after the high court junked the government-backed petition for a people's initiative for charter change.

Instead, the high court alleged that Evardone's statement gave the message that the decision on the people's initiative case was tainted with political motives.

Evardone, together with Raul Lambino, was a prime mover of the charter change bid, which the court rejected as a "grand deception" and "gigantic fraud."

According to the petitioners, Evardone's statement linked Panganiban's integrity and publicly humiliated the justice, which only the government should be sanctioned in preserve the high court's integrity and to teach him a lesson in good manners and right conduct.

But the high court said the power to cite people for contempt should be used carefully, and should not be used for vindication or vindictiveness.

"Being a drastic and extraordinary remedy, the power of contempt should not be exercised unless clearly necessary in the interest of justice," it said.

The court said there was no evidence to establish that he was either misquoted or his statements taken out of context. He also said he only mentioned the possibility of Panganiban joining the legislature because other lawyers in the media have been talk of this, and that he had no ill motive against Panganiban and respected the high court's ruling.

It also pointed out that Evardone's words about Panganiban's plans were speculations or personal observations and were based on a president not denying or saying is to transact penalty.

The court ruled that Evardone's remarks did not cast doubt on the integrity of the court.

It added that since Panganiban did not seek an elective post, the petition had become moot and academic.

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THE DAILY GOSPEL

Wednesday, September 5, 2007
22nd Week in Ordinary Time

1st Reading: 1:1-9
Gospel: Luke 4:38-44

Leaving the synagogue, Jesus went to the home of Simon. His mother-in-law was suffering from high fever and they asked him to do something for her. Standing over her, he rebuked the fever, and it left her. Immediately she got up and waited on them.

At sunset, people sent to him many kinds of sickness were brought to Jesus. Laying his hands on each one, he healed them. Demons were also driven out, shouting as they departed from them as sons, "You are the Son of God!" He rebuked them and would not allow them to speak, for they knew he was the Messiah.

At daybreak he went off to a deserted place. People were out in search of him and, finding him, they tried to dissuade him from leaving. But he said, "I have to go to other towns to announce the good news of the kingdom of God. That is what I was sent to do." So Jesus continued to preach in the synagogues of the Jewish country.

Commentary:

Paul begins each of his pastoral letters with a hymn to the Father, Son, and Spirit—the Trinity. This is a prayer that sets about preparing us to be the greatest of the teachings of the apostles in their unity and the teaching of Jesus Christ, universally, in every church to the last gospels. They are letters, with details of people who bring news from the communities to Paul as he travels. They must always be seen in light of the Word—as efforts to apply faith to the lives of those to be taught to obey Jesus' words.

Jesus knows the public places of prayer and comes to his place' hours and he is told of Peter's mother-in-law's illness. He goes to her immediately, grasping her and pulling her up to life. And she responds by waiting on those closest to her. Where do we go after public prayer? Do we immediately pour close to a sick friend who we visit, doing similar needs in our homes and communities? What he did for her, he will do for everyone who is in a separated and sometimes without being asked. Jesus came for healing and holiness, for justice and reconciliation, for peace with God and among us all.

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Japanese fertilizer aid arrives

By Cynthia D. Balana

JAPAN HAS PROVIDED SHIPMENTS OF 15,607 metric tons of fertilizers worth P435 million to the Philippines under the 2006 Japan Grant Assistance for Underprivileged Farmers Program (Series I) 2005 of Japan's Increased Food Production Program).

These farm inputs will be distributed to poor farmer-beneficiaries in selected nine provinces by the Department of Agriculture through the National Agricultural and Fishery Council (NAFC).

The final shipment carrying 5,000 metric tons of fertilizers arrived in the port of Iloilo on Aug. 26. A ceremony for the formal turnover of the fertilizers will be held on Sept. 6 at 9 a.m. at the port of Iloilo between officials of the Japanese embassy in Manila and the Department of Agriculture.

According to the embassy, the first shipment of 5,607 metric tons of fertilizers arrived in Seafront, Mandwike, Bataan, on July 20 this year. The initial batch of fertilizers will be offered for bidding and distribution in selected farmers cluster landholdings are now in Cotabato and before in the provinces of Isabela, Cagayan and Nueva Ecija.

Writing workshop

WHITE LIES: A TOOL? TELLER: TOOL? NO-penned lies to be unique. An advocacy piece must not only tote but must make demands. After you've presented the problem, offer a solution.

Museum director, environmental advocate and writer John Silva is at it again.

Silva is set to hold genre writing and advocacy writing workshops on Sept. 11 and 12, respectively.

In an introduction in his courses, he gave the tips in the opening paragraph.

"These tips on effective writing have helped me get the grants I needed and pushed the causes I support," he said in a letter to friends and supporters.

Reservations may be made by calling or texting Silva at 0926-729-9929 or e-mailing biblical.jabs799@msn.com

Abalos impeachment eyed

From page A1

the impeachment vote, to effectively unseat the official.

Finance Secretary Margarito Teves has underscored that he has had met with ZTE executives twice—at his home in Ayala Alabang last year and at the Shangri-la Hotel in Mandaluyong City a few months ago. Abalos, he said, was present on both occasions.

Businessmen and opposition lawmakers were giving themselves a "reasonable timetable" of three weeks to a month to build the case.

The Cabinet official was among several people identified at a minority caucus Monday afternoon as possible sources who could deliver the goods against the Comelec chair.

"If it is worth its progress," he said, "We are looking for high-quality documentary evidence."

The chair and commissioners of the Comelec can be removed only through the impeachment process. An impeachment complaint—a pet of at least one-third or 79 votes in the House—is it could be forwarded to the Senate for trial.

A businessman said he was willing to testify in any investigation against Abalos that the Comelec chair offered him "favors" in Venezia III, an exclusive of townhouses Buildings Inc. (ABI), a bribe to withdraw its bid for the NBN project.

The businessman said the bribe would have come from the kin of the project, Jose Pidal, who is a relative of Abalos.

A businessman connected to Abalos' political rival Iloilo Rep. Neptali Gonzales II said he could not have brokered the deal because he was not powerful enough to do that. But he admitted that he accepted money for Abalos from ZTE officials who, he said, had become his golf buddies.

Come out

Abalos yesterday asked his accusers to come out in the open before he answers the allegations that he tried to bribe Venezia.

"Unless this man comes out, I'm sorry. I cannot talk about him. Let us not glorify this so-called unnamed source from one can you answer an unnamed source? Let this unnamed source come out before I glorify that," Abalos told reporters.

He said that if the accuser was De Venezia himself then he would answer the accusations.

"But he [De Venezia III] was not the one who said that. Was he the one who said that? If he was the one, I will answer that," he said.

ZTE on Monday said it did not enjoy undue advantages over ABI and the US Ditc process in entering the NBN contract.

Reform bloc

Hontiveros said members of the so-called "reform bloc" in the House had been talking about the minority's plan to file an impeachment complaint against Abalos.

"To their mind, the proofs of evidence we have are not yet enough to pursue an impeachment case," she said. "But they are not closing their door on it."

At the minority caucus, Hontiveros said lawyers in the opposition bloc noted that the impeachment complaint against Abalos should involve pieces of evidence "of greater volume and quality" than those in ordinary cases.

"It, for past, we believe that the allegations are very serious," she said. "If they constitute an impeachable offense as the days unfold, it will be our legislative duty to build a strong impeachment case."

But the planned complaint would not be limited to Abalos' purported complicity in the ZTE deal, the lawmaker said.

She said a secondary gripe it would be the Comelec's alleged "repressive and repressive election officers" under Abalos' watch.

She cited purportedly widespread cheating during the 2004 elections marked by the "Hello, Garci" controversy, and the case of Mindanao election supervisor Lintang Bedol.

Hontiveros earlier criticized the six-month jail term that the Comelec had imposed on Bedol. He was found guilty of indirect contempt for failing to show up at Comelec investigations of alleged irregularities in his area of jurisdiction last May.

"Ironically, Abalos might be impeached because of the ZTE deal," she said. "But we will put on record the many election offenses he has committed."

In the Upper Chamber, Senate President Manuel Villar said something the ZTE contract was the "proper action" to take.

"There are many things which we need to be cognizant, many personalities involved concerning a huge amount, and we could not even justify why we need to borrow a substantial sum when specifics have not been set," he said.

Sen. Francis Escudero said the contract was "unpopular, dirty and stinking."

A lawyer of ABI, the Pilipino Star Ngayon reported, said the consolidated proposal for an NBN, which the company would address the alleged $130 million bribery attempt by Abalos to a congressional inquiry.

Blatantly Obama said ABI was offended when the deal was awarded to ZTE despite its superior proposal for a national broadband project in terms of both cost and technology. With a report from Gil C. Cabacungan Jr. and Norman Bordadora

P2 trillion worth of IT projects in the pipeline

From page A1

gano Administration Network Project (PMNP) and the Philippine Research, Education and Government Information Network (Pregine).

The 21 ongoing and prospective ICT projects, plus the nascent government broadband networks, are the provisions of the NBN that would add about P15 billion to the more than P2 trillion that was already spent and would be spent on the government's ICT projects.

Aside from the P15 billion that the Philippine government would borrow from China for the NBN, which was awarded to Chinese firm ZTE, another P15 billion would be borrowed from China for the Department of Education's (DepEd) ICT.

Huawei

The DLP was likely to be handed to ZTE's competitor, Huawei Technologies Co. Ltd.

Tara DP economics professors, Raul V. Fabella and Emmanuel de Dios, said in a paper that it defied logic for government to carry out broadband network, much less two.

The Fabella and de Dios would be study the implications of government having actually four broadband networks.

The PMNP also known as the Hutch Project because it was built through more than P400 million loan from the Hutchison government, was supposed to modernize the government's voice and information network.

The Office of the Press Secretary is in implementing arm.

The Hutch Project was a project to connect all offices of the Philippine Information Agency (PIA), the News and Information Bureau (NIB) and the Bureau of Broadcast Service (BBS) to enable them to transmit data, voice and video faster.

But high costs of satellite technology and lack of funds have hampered many of equipment that were bought for the PMNP into dust-magnets, according to Malacañang officials who had first hand knowledge of the Hutch Project.

President's funding is fixed at P5.2 billion, which was borrowed from the Japanese government through the Japan Bank for International Cooperation (JBIC).

The Department of Science and Technology (DOST), the implementing arm of Pregine, said in an website that Pregine was a "nationwide broadband network that interconnects academic institutions, government offices and R&D research and development centers in the Philippines."

As of June 2006, the DOST gave Pregine P2.6 million to start the first year of a "high performance research and education network."

"Pregine has more efficiently transmit and receive large amounts of data, video and voice and integrate many existing government information networks into a common network backbone," said the Pregine website.

The project being, which was scheduled to stretches to the Philippine Normal University, against Plan HEPPRP for 2006-2013, showed that some of the big-ticket projects computerizing government offices were done through build-operate-transfer (BOT) schemes.

Bizarre turnaround

BOT schemes applied to ICT projects made a lot of sense, according to the paper of Fabella and De Dios.

Under it, they seemed to done and build upon the logic and success of past privatizations, which had either brought in revenue, promoted efficiency (a better service, or both," said the paper.

It came as a bizarre turnaround, the paper said, when the government did not resort to the BOT scheme for the NBN and CIIP two projects that the government didn't need to own, in the first place.

Some of the projects listed in the MTPDP were utter failures, like the modernization of the election process under the Commission on Elections.

The MTPDP listed a P12-billion budget for the Comelec project that has turned out to be just a matter of public funds.

The project never took off, but hundreds of millions of pesos had already been withdrawn from government coffers for a request or contract that was declared invalid by the Supreme Court.

The computers are currently kept in a Comelec central warehouse in Manila.

Machine-readable passports

Another computerization project was for the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) that sought to replace hand-written Philippine passports and visas with machine-readable ones.

It cost P2 billion under a BOT project that has a life span of 10 years. The DFA has recently entered issuing machine-readable passports.

Yet another computerization project was for the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) to establish a "wide area network that will link all DOLE offices."

Part of the project was to develop a Labor Market Information System, or a computerized listing of job openings.

The DOLE ICT project was conceptualized in 1997 but its implementation started in 1998 and was to take at least P1.06 million in government funds to complete.

The Government Service Insurance System (GSIS) has its own computerization program, one that is now drawing flak for delaying the release of government workers' salary loans and pensions.

The $33-peso computerization project of the Land Transportation Office was one of the biggest items on the MTPDP list. It was P3.4 billion through a BOT contract and is a component of a bigger National Information Technology Plan for the 21st Century, or IT21, project to set up the country's IT sector as an estimated cost of $49.7 billion, or almost P2 trillion.

It was supposed to accelerate the issuance of drivers' licenses and other motor vehicle documents, but queues are still long in many LTO branches.

Birth certificates

The National Statistics Office, that is more popularly known as the agency that issues copies of birth certificates, was the beneficiary of a P2.1-billion BOT project to computerize its operations and speed up the processing of documents.

A computerization project of the Bureau of Internal Revenue was listed as having a budget of P4.4 billion.

Another broadband-related project was for the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) to administer the interconnection of 100 state universities and colleges (SUCs) through local area networks (LAN) and wide area networks (WAN).

LAN is a system that links computers together in a small area, like office or building. WAN is the same system applied to a larger area like a town, province or an entire country.

The CHED project has a listed cost of $1.5 billion and a completion period of three years.

Telepono sa Barangay

Under the MTPDP, the Department of Transportation and Communications was to carry out a P62.7-billion "alternative communication program."

This, according to the MTPDP planners, "shall serve as an alternative to the Municipal Telephone Program (MTPP) and the Telepono sa Barangay."

It was to install "telecenters in every municipality and public pay phones accessible to all barangays."

The government had already spent P1.5 billion of loans from Canada for the MTP that installed 2,488 telephone lines in 246 villages in the provinces of Quezon, Negros Oriental, Lanao del Norte, Zamboanga del Norte, Zamboanga del Sur, Sierra Bloomys and Misamis Occidental.

But the lines are now dead and the MTP fell apart as the use of cellular phones became more common.

Too poor to pay

It also proved to be a losing financial venture because most of the lines were installed in areas where poverty was so pervasive that people could barely afford three or four a day, much less pay for phone calls.

"Technology current is (MTP), and one official who took part in implementing the MTP.

"These guys working on the 3000 and CEF should learn lessons from this (MTP)," said the official. "It's Waste of Funds 101, but the lessons never sink in. It's as if money grow on trees."

Busa Forum

Malacañang officials, who helped prepare the MTPDP but declined to be identified for lack of clearance to talk from higher officials, said the listing of ongoing and proposed ICT projects in the government's six-year development plan indicated "an aggressive push for IT (information technology) projects."

It was an aggressive stance that Romulo Macapagal Arroyo herself announced in a speech at the Busa Forum in Boao, China, shortly before she witnessed the signing of the NBN deal with ZTE on April 21, 2007.

"In the Philippines, we are investing aggressively in the IT backbone," said Mrs Arroyo in the speech. "We are bringing the Internet to every high school."

It wasn't clear whether, at the time Mrs Arroyo said those words, her administration had already outlined what it wanted in series of ICT projects other than to construct all government offices through a broadband network and all public high schools to the Internet.

Written by President

But in a portion in the MTPDP detailing which ICT projects that Malacañang officials said Mrs Arroyo herself wrote, the President was well aware of what the problem in the ICT area was—the lack of private sector participation.

"The absence of clear and concise policies allowing investors and more efficient services to lower costs has discouraged the entry of new players and further investments in the (ICT) sector," Mr Arroyo wrote in a statement on Digital Infrastructure in the MTPDP.

"Clearly, there is need to sustain the momentum already gained toward the building of a digital infrastructure," she added in the ICT section of the MTPDP shortly after the May 2004 elections.

"Hence, efforts in pursuit of this goal will be further accelerated with the private sector playing a major role in these efforts," she added.

But officials were to some wonder for three years after she wrote those words for entering into a government-to-government deal with China for the NBN, a broadband network that would have no private sector participation.

GMA to bring top businessmen to Sydney

From page A1

ure and the country's biggest names in business will join the trip.

Listed as Philippine delegates to the Apec 2007 Business Summit are Jaime Augusto Zobel de Ayala, Andres Soriano III, Enrique Zobel, Jose Cuisia Jr., president and CEO of Philippine American Life and General Insurance Co. (Philamlife); Fernando Bernardino, president and CEO of Bogues Corp.; Teresita Sy-Coson, vice chair of SM Investments; and Jesus Tambunting, chair and CEO of Pharex's homeopathic Bank.

Roberto Ongpin, chair of Philam Insurance Inc., and Doris Magsaysay Ho, president and CEO of Magsaysay Group of Companies, are also attending as members of the Apec Business Advisory Council.

Australian Ambassador to the Philippines Tony Hely said Mr Arroyo decided to make the visit to Australia earlier because she knew that Australia would have a very busy schedule hosting the Apec leaders during the summit.

Hely said that aside from seeing the Apec summit, Bush would be making a state visit to Australia.

Tight security

In a briefing for the Philippine media, Hely said security in Sydney would be extremely tight because of the presence of Bush. He said for long, Bur was "not exactly popular" in Australia and demonstrations were expected to pour back.

Hely said large sections of Sydney would be locked down to ensure Bush and the other Apec leaders' safety.

A 10-km wall dubbed the "ring of steel" has been put up around Sydney's main tourist center near the world-famous Sydney Opera House where some of the meetings would take place.

Hely said the Apec leaders were expected to tackle the issue of disaster preparedness, the Asian influenza, sustainable development and climate change, terrorism and human security.

Apec groups Australia, Brunei, Canada, Chile, China, Indonesia, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Peru, the Philippines, the Russian Federation, Singapore, Chinese Taipei, Thailand, United States and Vietnam. The Apec is the pre-eminent forum established in 1989 to facilitate economic growth and prosperity in the Pacific rim nations.

'Sustainable future'

Together, the Apec economies represent over 40 percent of the world's population or about 2.6 billion people, and 56 percent of global GDP and around 48 percent of world trade.

The Apec economies in the cabinet-level or ministerial meetings, to be attended by the 21 world leaders, over 40 ministers, 400 international business leaders, more than 6,000 delegates and support personnel. It will be covered by more than 1,000 members of the media.

Apec 2007 adopted the theme "Strengthening our community and building a sustainable future."

At the end of three-two-day retreat, the leaders will issue the Apec Economic Leaders Declaration which will contain their "strategic directions" for Apec next year. The 21 leaders will have their group photo garbed in the host country's traditional or chosen attire.

Strong message

Foreign Secretary Alberto Romulo yesterday said the Philippines would send a "clear and strong message" in Apec about its long-term economic achievements and preparedness to compete economically on a global scale.

"Our message to Australia and the world is: the Philippines means business; our growth will be sustained; we are here for the long term. It is time the world takes notice," Romulo said in his departure statement.

"We, the small and economic reforms have taken root and an showing concrete results: Our 2007 second quarter economic growth is the fastest in two decades; we have had consecutive quarterly growth in the fastest in two decades; we have had consecutive quarterly growth in the fastest in two decades; we have had consecutive quarterly growth in

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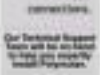

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Media guidelines set for Estrada verdict

By Jocelyn R. Uy

IN A BID TO BE A WITNESS TO HISTORY, news on the six-year-old plunder case of deposed former president Joseph Estrada, the Sandiganbayan Sheriff's office yesterday notified the media that guidelines will be set on the news coverage of the historic event.

Sandiganbayan Sheriff Ed Urbina, however, said no date has been set for the promulgation but his office would finalize by Friday a list of do's and don'ts for the media during the promulgation.

"These guidelines will be coming from the Justices and are valid because these rules by Justice," Urbina told the inquirer.

Urbina said in a memorandum issued by the Supreme Court, live coverage of the promulgation was prohibited, meaning no video cameras shall be allowed in the court room.

However, reporters will be allowed inside the court room but will be prohibited from bringing in cameras, tape recorders and cellular phones.

"These are just proposals and we will polish the rules in the next three days," Urbina said.

He added that his office would either meet with members of the media to orient them of the rules or send them the list instead.

The promulgation is expected to take place on or before Sept. 25 during the justices of the sandiganbayan's Special Division sub the Supreme Court for an extension in rendering a decision on Estrada's P4 billion plunder case.

The members of the Special Division which was created specifically to try Estrada's case are Presiding Justice Teresita Leonardo de Castro, Associate Justices Francisco Villaruz Jr. and Gregorio Pesigan.

CLASS PICTURE. Prosecutors, defense lawyers, court staff members and members of the Sandiganbayan special court trying [illegible] posterity after the trial.

Joseph Estrada's plunder trial goes for

Survey a vindication for Erap, says Jinggoy

By Kristine L. Mara

A "VINDICATION"

This was how San Juan City Mayor Joseph "Jinggoy" Ejercito described the findings of a recent Social Weather Stations survey that said 77 percent of Mega Manila residents were willing to forgive his father, ousted President Joseph Estrada.

Ejercito said in an interview that the survey was also heartening for the many who showed the same respondents believed President Macapagal-Arroyo and her husband, Jose Miguel "Mike" Arroyo, were more corrupt than Estrada.

"We, of course, can't forget the fact that they (the Arroyos) were involved in a power grab... so the [survey] is really a vindication," Ejercito said. "It just goes to show that people believe that my father is not guilty in this political trial."

Estrada is awaiting the verdict in his plunder trial that ended in June, six years after his ouster and arrest in 2001 on charges he took gambling and tax kickbacks and illicit stock transactions.

The survey also showed that 71 percent of Mega Manila residents believe President Arroyo is involved in corrupt practices while only 21 percent believe this of Estrada. Mike Arroyo was thought of as corrupt by 77 percent of the respondents.

In a separate interview last week, Ejercito said these survey results will not stop the people from expressing their sentiments when the Sandiganbayan hands down its verdict in his father's trial soon.

"We don't know how the people would react," he said.

Ejercito said the family believes Estrada would be convicted of plunder.

The heightened security measures being implemented by the government were before the reading of the verdict showed President Arroyo's "insecurities" were his father's popularity, Ejercito said.

An ally of Mr. Arroyo's in the House of Representatives, however, yesterday dismissed the SWS survey result that showed 77 percent of the respondents believe she is corrupt.

Davao City Rep. Prospero Nograles, former majority leader and current chair of the House committee on the Commission on Appointments, said the survey was conducted in the opposition's stronghold, and so was not representative of the people's true sentiments.

Antichet Arroyo ally Bohol Rep. Adam Relson Jala, said the survey only showed that the opposition was "drastically afraid" of Estrada's conviction was just an effort at damage control to preempt a guilty verdict.

The survey, Jala said, was "an self-serving to harassed regime to use a basis." He said the the opposition was again using verbal smear by mind conditioning the public before the court's ruling.

"Please look again. Check and correct the if I am wrong here. It is not clear that they conducted the survey exclusively in an opposition bastion which is Metro Manila?" Nograles said in a text message.

The survey, dubbed "Project Theodore," was conducted on July 15-20 in Metro Manila, Batangas, Laguna, Cavite and Rizal. It was commissioned by former Sen. Sergio Osmeña III and focused on the people's feelings toward the Arroyo and Estrada.

"Manila does not speak for the entire country. That's why the unsurprise is very angry and surprised. Manila believes that it is the entire Philippines," Nograles, who is from Mindanao, said.

"What about us in Mindanao and the Visayas? We are not part of the Philippines anymore? Does this not create the wrong public perception, fuel more and more prejudice and a hate campaign against the President?" he said. With a report from Norman Bordadora

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

OPINION

Bad posture

EDITORIAL

POSTURING, WITH REGARD TO THE COMING verdict on the plunder trial of former President Joseph Estrada, is the name of the game. In this game, neither the opposition nor the administration is innocent. In the non-stop rumor mill that is the Philippine political scene, not only is a looming verdict widely whispered about, but the Sandiganbayan is supposed to be

finding difficulty wrestling with the complexities of the case. What is more is that the coming verdict (there are multiple charges, after all) have political circles caught up in a kind of mass hysteria.

The result is sabre-rattling on both sides, literally on the part of the Armed Forces of the Philippines and rhetorically on the side of Estrada's partisans. The AFP has held parades to show off the troops, while the Philippine National Police has pledged to mobilize enough policemen for crowd control. Malacañang has launched a propaganda offensive to condition the public into expecting trouble, which the Arroyo administration says it can handle. Estrada loyalists have reacted by proclaiming they can muster crowds and that these crowds would be big and angry.

As if such posturing weren't enough, the Palace and opposition leaders have also taken to working at cross-purposes with Estrada himself. For months, the idea of either a presidential pardon or an amnesty proclamation ratified by Congress, in case of a conviction by the court, has been floated. Administration allies went through the motions of proposing it, and the Palace has also gone through the exercise of considering it. The opposition has tacitly endorsed the idea by releasing the results of surveys it commissioned.

However, Estrada himself, whether merely in an act of political theater or because he genuinely believes in his innocence, has insisted that he will never accept a pardon. He may be in detention, but he remains a political virtuoso.

On the surface, it may seem appropriate for the Palace and the opposition to publicly consider options for Estrada after the verdicts have been handed down. Considerations of a pardon or amnesty after all, mean politics can only begin when justice ends in terms of a verdict. It would be a great error, however, for the public to think that all the posturing is par for the course. It is not. The administration and opposition both obviously think they have an insight into the eventual decisions of the court. More than that, both are actively trying to influence the court.

Left to its own devices, the court would have wrapped up the Estrada trial and proceeded with its deliberations and handed down its verdicts at its own pace and in its own good time. The public, used to Estrada's long period of comfortable detention, would probably have shrugged off the whole thing, including the verdicts. The Palace, however, began to sound the alarm with regard to the reactions of Estrada partisans. The alarmed rumors of the Palace's reactions in turn inspired new heights of rhetorical bravado on the part of Estrada loyalists.

Sounding the alarm is a tried-and-tested administration tactic to hijack the headlines. The opposition is also an old pro at playing that game, hence its commissioned surveys. Both sides are always looking for ways to reinvigorate the dedication of their supporters, while weakening the resolve of their enemies. Obviously, considerations of fair play and justice are irrelevant in the face of such tactical concerns.

The Palace is trying to reassure the Sandiganbayan that there won't be chaos in case of guilty verdicts. The opposition is trying to frighten the Sandiganbayan into thinking there would be a revolt if it convicts Estrada. Both sides are trying to temper whatever verdicts are in the works, by emphasizing the verdicts they'd prefer (and options, including conviction for some charges and possibly acquittal for others) and renders the public allegedly wouldn't like.

In other words, the administration and the opposition are trying to turn the case into a political football and strong-arm the court. By doing so, both sides are further eroding public confidence in the justice system. They are doing a disservice not to Estrada, who is a player in this two-sided game, but to the citizenry.

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Five evils of cross-ownership in power industry

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

PRESIDENT ARROYO HAS SIGNED the amendments of the Sipag law that, contrary to its original intent of reducing power rates, has instead led to higher rates, the second highest in Asia, one only to those in Japan, a rich and highly developed country with a wealthier of living many times higher than ours. The Sipag law was signed into law by California model of deregulating and privatizing the monopolistic power industry by creating competition in every sub-sector. Competition will force the players to reduce costs and be more efficient or be able to sell power profitably.

It is difficult for laymen to understand the workings of the power industry. For their benefit, therefore, here is a simplified explanation of the power sector and the Epira and its flaws.

Electricity flows from the generating plant through the transmission lines to the distribution lines of the distribution utility like Meralco. The distribution company the users' end means, factories and business establishments or the power owners, usually owners and their family's dwellings, with the electricity and collects the monthly bills.

The Epira that was passed in June 2001 divided the industry into four sectors: generation, transmission, distribution and supply. Transmission and distribution, however, are considered natural monopolies in providing the lines through which power flows and will continue to be regulated sectors under the supervision of the Energy Regulatory Commission (ERC). The ERC's job is to make sure that the rates these monopolies will always be reasonable and fair.

Accordingly, Section 36 mandated the unbundling of rates and functions of these four sectors.

The National Power Corp. (Napocor) was split into two generation and transmission. The distribution side was also split. Each one was required to submit its rates for the reserve and approval of the ERC.

But the whole thing is weak for the benefit of the consumers, there has to be enough players in the generation and supply sectors that will compete with one another in serving the consumers.

Section 23 states the whole purpose of the Epira: "A distribution utility shall have the obligation to supply customers in the least cost manner or in a captive market." But this obligation is nullified by the evil of "cross ownership."

What is cross-ownership? It is the case of a company in one sector, say distribution, owning a power company in another sector, say generation. There is a conflict of interest here. A distributor cannot supply electricity at the least cost if it has to buy power from a power company selling electricity at a high price.

The framers of Epira made the harmful effects of cross-ownership and prohibited it in the original version. Unfortunately, lobbying by vested interests sent over-protective congressmen to the House of Representatives. The cross-ownership ban was watered down, banning cross-ownership only in the transmission sector and other sectors but not cross-ownership between the distribution and generation sectors. Thus, the electric utility, which owns the distribution, the country's largest distributor, was allowed to own and operate generation facilities. Epira's purpose is to make distributors like Meralco buy power from competing power generators to get the least cost. But with the cross-ownership ban cross-ownership, Meralco is now allowed to enter into negotiated bilateral contracts with their generating companies. This loophole has led to five evils, the end result of which is a still high power rates.

And No. 1: These bilateral contracts entitling 1,000 megawatts or other source are not public. They all have guaranteed minimum take or pay provisions that were the real cause of the skyrocketing Purchased Power Adjustment (PPA). Meralco contracted power at P5.50 per kWh with no more assurance when power cost for Meralco from Napocor and its IPPs (Independent Power Producers) at P3.97 per kWh. This would not have happened if Meralco the distributor, is dealing business with an unrelated generator as an arm's length. They would have held competitive bidding. Even generators so that they could supply power at the least cost to their captive customers.

And No. 2: Since Meralco represents 71 percent of the country's power requirements, it become a monopoly with full rights to choose who gets to supply their power requirements. The Lopezes of Meralco that became the controller of the country's new generation sector since Napocor is privatized as the Epira envisions. There would be no true competition as intended by the law and no chance for lower power rates in the future. Also, the future development of the generation sector on which the country depends for its future needs, will be totally dependent on the whims and caprices of one group.

And No. 3: There will be few bidders for the Napocor's power plants because only the Lopez-controlled investors can come into the sector. The government will lose hundreds of billions of pesos in lost value necessary from the Napocor assets. Nobody will buy the generators if it knows that the guaranteed power is distributed like Meralco.

Remember, there were two failed biddings for the 600-MW Calaca power plant. Any bidder was going to be sold only for $320 million to a Malaysian group with the Lopez-owned First Gen offering only $164 million in their sweet biddings, whether who sold for a whopping $630 million, even higher than the Lopezes after all $570 million.

(To be continued)

The bell tolls

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

GRAFT AND THE JUDICIAL SHIFT-OR STIFLING

survey that shows 48 percent of Filipinos want him punished immediately and another 38 percent "preferred after court rulings" if he is found guilty of plunder. A further proof of his people's unrelenting faith in him. "I want to thank the people for continuing to believe in me despite the fact that I have spent the last six years. See you soon," Erap said in a text blast.

Not really. Though one he should really thank is Glenn Sierra-gaal dempo. The SWS survey does not reflect the people's continuing faith in him, it reflects the people's continuing lack of faith in the institutions, it reflects the people's belief that Erap is guilty. It does not reflect the people's desire to see Erap shown democracy restored as ex-president who has suffered enough for his sins, who has paid the price for his crimes, who is not to old penalties viewed in him by the worst marauding for her greater sins.

The situation is not unlike that of Cory's time. The one thing that doomed the rumors they against the ex-dictator imprisoned at the height of Edsa I is a record something through the papers of blatant lying, was neither the skilled of lawyers lawyers, though they were formidable, nor the rest upon the were offered for dropsies, though it was a factor. No, Marcos's dropsies was the representatives of those who came after Marcos, whose own overdoctrine and pillage made a nation forget what had come before. Or if not made it forget, at least took the sting off its memory like anaesthesia. It's not easy simply forcing the help of yesterday when you are then ing the last of today.

The situation today is not unlike that of Cory's time, but it is also not quite like it. It is worse—but, for worse. The plunder of the Cory administration might have been epic, but it was nowhere near as epic as Marcos's. The vigilantes and paramilitary groups might have been a step in the face of the lowly restored democracy, but they never visited the murderousness of the martial Law regime.

The situation today is the opposite. Erap might have been corrupt, but neither he nor his ministers made this country the most corrupt in Asia. Me and Mrs. Fidel have. Erap might have retained the services of gangsters in his Cabinet and entertainers in his anyo-rinos agenda, but he never wrought the wholesale slaughter of journalists and political activists. GMA and Norberto Gonzales have.

While at that, that was an amusing remark, then Erap made. When the then Senate President of Mr Arroyo have offered that I have for the country of my choice, take anything I want, and no charges will be filed against me, if I were going, I would have accepted it right there and then." "No, answered because if I'm—and it sounds perfectly believable, given that GMA had been crying up-grease the Erap hustler since he so called "Erap Off"—that that is the difference between Erap and GMA: Erap is corrupt but he is not evil. GMA is evil. The difference is not that he is innocent and the others are guilty. That difference is that he is the only guilty party, like Indonesia's Suharto, who never thought of fleeing abroad.

Maybe he did. OMG why?

That is his saving grace, though an interesting one. Erap is the one or of presidents who is likely to find American asset uncomfortable than jail. If and when GMA is offered the same deal after she is out of power, one way or another—and she's one who other than might to be there—I have no doubt she would accept it. I never bought Juliet Arroyo's pitch that there was a constitutional remedy to corruption, which was impeachment. No such remedy existed. The only remedy is ex-Edsa3, which was why GMA was preferable to Erap to 95%. As experience has shown...in this country, again and again—an easygoing and not very bright rogue is always preferable to a ruthless and devious despot.

What all this means is that the "Erap issue" is no longer about Erap, it is about GMA. It doesn't draw attention to the judged, it draws attention to the judges, her basic fairness at the very time Erap is throwing himself at the feet of Lady Justice, or is it Lady Justitia, begging his case before the court of law and the court of public opinion. Lady Macbeth refuses to desire herself as the love of the people relying on SO 666 and Macbeth Defense hearings, whichever is the greater abomination. Erap is relying on the feelings with many have already heard and knowing what many already know. GMA damning Erap is more than a case of the pot calling the kettle black, it's a case of the empire of love calling her enemies the center of hate.

Truly, GMA may not stand one month or one long in the succession rule after a non-emergency of country. There are cases being the arrest of John Mc Jones for murder and the impending conviction of Erap for plunder. But GMA has made a resounding victory for her, experiencing the sounding of her enemies. As a retired bleak, or blood, the implications of those developments cannot be lost on someone who makes account of the very same crimes and misdemeanors of plunder and murder viewed as a mind-boggling degree. A conviction of Erap should henceforth make any Philippine president, elected or appointed, for especially to an unelected one, feel the Sword of Damocles hanging over him. Not that. And a conviction of Gloria should make any Filipino official, left or right, as ex-ex-ed, realize there can be no safe haven anywhere in the civilized world for those with blood on their hands. While I'm under the operation, again of how groovy GMA will go into the night after 2010.

Here is one case where Joel Tesoro's famous lines should ring loudly in the halls of Malacañang:

"Never send to know for whom the bell tolls. It tolls for thee."

Islands of good governance

COMMENTARY

Joachim von Amsberg

WHEN I CAME TO THE PHILIPPINES IN 2004, I was struck by what has been called the "Philippine paradox": Here was a country with much to offer in terms of human resources, natural endowments, and a wealth of talented economic managers, but one that was ranked among the poorest performers in the world, not produce consistently disappointing development outcomes. With its rich natural resources, dynamic and talented people, and, at least on the surface, development-friendly economic policies, why has the Philippines not achieved faster growth and more significant poverty reduction in the last 20 years?

The answer that we found was that weaknesses in governance and weakness of public institutions so much for the economic good news building back the reputable and effective islands of excellence, despite the people of public servants, and the country of a reliable investment climate that would encourage rapid growth.

If weak governance lies at the heart of lagging development outcomes, what should be the priority for reform? And how can an international development agency like the World Bank support such reforms? We looked for answers and solutions within the Philippines and found a wealth of experience and knowledge that could help build its institutions, deliver services, encourage popular participation and strengthen the social contract between Filipinos and their government. We also found some examples of "islands of good governance" and decided to focus our support on them.

Over years later, I am amazed by the leaps toward good governance that are possible when individuals and organizations for development have effective leadership.

Fiscal reforms. Three years ago, public deficits were high, debt was increasing and a fiscal crisis threatened to bring poverty to millions. The government had to make difficult decisions in the public interest, and the payoff was huge. Today the budget is moving toward balance, public debt has decreased and more resources can be invested for development. The crisis threat has disappeared, rapidly, bringing down interest rates and creating

Although such "islands" have contributed to a more positive outlook for the economy there have yet to translate into significant reduction in the Philippines up the ladder of sustained progress. The development challenge is to effect these constraints toward modern governance.

Economic stability is a clear area challenge where significant progress has been achieved. The payoffs from recent fiscal reforms should serve as an inspiration for governance. Most of them can administration and related reforms to be extended to sustain.

A dynamic investment climate based on effective competition is achievable in the medium term. Investments in the country, at 25 percent of gross domestic product, continues to lag behind the 30 percent rate in 20 percent in neighboring countries. Many reforms that increase competition in key sectors will greatly enhance competitiveness, encourage investments, free private jobs, raise incomes and reduce poverty, which in turn, will reinforce support for sound policy reforms.

Social inclusion is the hardest challenge of all. Compared to other countries, the Philippines has very high inequity of incomes, assets and opportunities. The challenge is to create a virtuous cycle of mutually reinforcing inequality and weak governance so that social and economic policies which provide better economic and social opportunities for the poor participate in the development.

I am optimistic about the future of the Philippines in the medium term. The benefits of reform for economic stability, investment climate, social inclusion and overall better governance will not just automatically "pay off" in the near future" dimension but the country is capable of moving forward rapidly on this agenda and achieving its potential and its aspirations.

If the Philippines can grasp the current window of opportunity, I am confident that it will achieve the rapid social and economic progress that Filipinos aspire for and deserve.

Joachim von Amsberg is the country director of the World Bank in the Philippines.

Evangelical Catholics

MUCH HAS BEEN SAID ABOUT THE "CHAR MENTALITY" in the spin within the Coalition for Christ (CFC). I wouldn't throw out that single, but I worry that the focus on alleged jealousy could hamper civil exchanges, not just for CFC but for the INC as well in general. Already, I'm getting "You are, I said you are" feedback from Filipino-Americans who have always been educated on support local organizations because they are said to be prone to in fighting and cutting each other.

My take here is that we are dealing with two groups that have big differences in the interpretation of what it means to be a Catholic organization. On one hand, we have Tony Meloto and Gerard Ballinga, who have modeled, in his case words, on "the Filipino version of Joseph Fernandez and Jaime Cardinal Sin's evangelization model housing, health and livelihood programs. Meloto's approach has more in common with what we can call "evangelical Catholics," represented by Frank Padilla and his Southeast Community movement.

PINOY KASI

Michael L. Tan

Padilla says Gerard Ballinga has moved away from the Catholic Church's teachings. One example they've been citing is Gerard Ballinga's acceptance of money from corporations that are in favor of "population control." Although he didn't name the corporations, virtual fertility was acting up to Pfizer, which is in support big Marilen's health projects. Pfizer produces the injectable contraceptive Depo-Provera.

Padilla seems especially sensitive in his opposition to family planning, given the size her group is called. CFC PPH. Foundation for Family and Life). Meloto has been cold in his response, saying that he subscribes to the Catholic Church's pro-life teachings, his movement is engaging in wider definition of life to include homeless children and families living in ruins.

Defending Catholicism

With the majority of Filipinos claiming to be Catholics, it is important that we understand what's going on in the Church's members of power, both in the Vatican and in regional missions.

I got the term "evangelical Catholicism" from an article in the Aug. 31, 2007 issue of the National Catholic Reporter (NCR), a liberal American Catholic periodical. The article, "The Triumph of Evangelical Catholicism," was written by Fr. Andrew Abbott. There was no mention of the Philippines in the article, but I was struck by how the descriptions of evangelical Catholicism resonated with the CFC controversy.

Abbott proposes in his article that "beginning with the election of Pope John Paul II in 1978, Catholicism has become a sexually more conservative religion." Doctrine, Abbott argues, is the head of the Congregation of the Doctrine of Faith was the ever eighties and ever orthodox Josef Cardinal Ratzinger. The cardinal is now Pope Benedict XVI.

Abbott writes his article in the light of mass events, both occurring within three days in early July. The first was Pope Benedict's address to the Catholic bishops of Brazil, which put on permission of the local bishops. The second was a television tour from the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith which states that the Church of Christ "subsists in" Catholicism.

Those two events by the Vatican are, for Abbott, "subtext assertions" of an evangelical impulse, with three major objectives: asserting the authority of the Pope and the bishops, patrolling doctrinal borders and asserting the exclusivity of Catholicism as the way to salvation.

Abbott's point is now, but classic evangelical Catholics were born-again and, in many cases, are using identity against those who are in a dangerous global drift toward secularism, and to what the Pope has called "the dictatorship of relativism." They aren't especially about the latter, which suggests some internal strife that adds the more understanding of the recommendations of Pope John Paul II. The Pope's encyclical Ecclesia in Europa made out of desperate poverty. They also oppose the view that all religions are equally valid, does for every reason, since on the rise of the word "subsists," which according to Abbott, is a way of using the "true Church of Christ endures" in Catholicism.

Evangelical Catholics are doctrinal purity and exposure in a secular and pluralistic world. In 1992, Pope John Paul II issued a document, "the Christian Future," setting parameters for dialogue from "ambivalent teachings." Such teachings make no claims of divine revelation, but are those by Vatican bureaucrats" "moral authority based on its long history." Abbott has been sought by the Catholic Church over the centuries. Bandages in that time stirred the host on western powers, the host on rationalism and the immorality of prostitution and homosexuality as examples where there could be no compromise. Today, the host on abortion and euthanasia by local evangelical Catholics against contemporary issues.

Evangelical Catholics are still a minority but are "extraordinarily dynamic," according to Abbott. To be sure, there are variations, one, in born-hard line they are for. In the United States, an entire town, Ave Maria, is being built to air-every detail Catholic values by Tom Monaghan, founder of Domino's Pizza. Another one is the Domino's pizza chain. I attended him in a recent CNN interview clarifying that the community would not require close residents be Catholics, he also backed down on a previous plan to forbid the sale of contraceptives, but Maria, allow for real relief such a homosexual be illegal.

Where

There's more than in this CFC battle than meets the eye. Padilla and his ensuring movement is only one of the most recent manifestations of evangelical Catholic energy. The past few years, they have been successful in trying to get the government to implement more Catholic line in empowering family planning efforts.

I admire the way Gerard Ballinga has taken on social development agenda, and I can only hope Meloto and his followers prove that Catholicism can be reformed, not, by setting up our share of moral responsibilities in a pluralistic society.

The socially engaged Catholic is not unique. A growing "humanist Buddhist" movement has emerged in Taiwan and spread throughout Southeast Asia. One group, Tzu Chi, recently moved all the residents of an island, many less do to the ground, and rebuilt them new homes, complete with schools—and a temple. Like Meloto and Gerard Ballinga, humanist Buddhists have sometimes been criticized as having diluted their religiosity, but they explain that Buddhism has to go beyond prayers.

I consider, I am wondering, too, of how the Filipino diaspora includes quite a number of Catholic priests sent out as missionaries to all the six sectors of the world. It would be interesting to see if they pursue a path of aggressive evangelism through preaching and claiming to bring the only true religion, or instead choose to base mission in Christ by serving people and communities.

A women's afternoon

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

A HISTORICAL MOMENTOUS OCCASION TOOK place yesterday at the Senate, for I was sure that it would not receive the media attention it deserved. That was the observance of the 25th anniversary of the neighborliness of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (Cedaw), especially the launching of the book "Shaping the Women's Global Agenda: Dialogues with Cedaw," which not only tells the life stories and life experiences of seven Filipinas, described as "the founders of the contemporary women's movement for the Philippines."

Convened at the Senate hall that otherwise would have been occupied by senators, the event was graced by Senate President, Ambassador Susan Gonzalez Mercado, Dr. Myrna B. Lusterman, former Secretary Florence "Chit" Quisumbing and Dr. Soledad Aurora de Dios. They were joined by the sister of the late Justice Jose B.L. Reyes, who was also among the signatories of the book and who sat in as recorder for the history of the local women's movement, while the book would tell us in further detail how those women blazed a trail for women's rights and issues from the time of the dictatorship of Ferdinand E. Marcos, through the post-Edsa years, also making known as the "Women's Bill of Rights, from a declaration of intent to an instrumentality binding document that has been ratified by a majority of the countries in the world.

Added Dr. Olivia Habilla Tijam of Manila's Pamantasan ng Lungsod ng Maynila, "Until one of the women, with Ambassador Mercado as my advisor, "Shaping the Women's Global Agenda" deserves to be read not only by those who were there, the work they did to map out the course the United Nations would take in advancing the cause of women worldwide. This work would be done mainly through our bodies, the UN Commission on the Status of Women (CSW), and Cedaw, either as chair or members of the Cedaw committee of experts.

* * *

It was Brenda, elected chair of the UNCSW in 1986, who "successfully presided over the first major gathering of governments to review the Decade—the much debated death of the Declaration on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women—in 1985", though it would take 10 years before that document would render into the Convention we know today.

Three other Filipinas—Shalom, Brenda and Lourdes—also served as Cedaw chairs, each of them facing unique challenges, from getting nations to overcome pre-political differences to focus on women's rights and issues, to overcoming traditional-minded resistance to such issues as reproductive rights and equality under the law for women.

Three other women—Corina, Delos and Bella—and Manalo, who would win the distinction of having drafted both the UN CSW and Cedaw declarations, respectively, the first deeply personal advocacies—for her.

In her introduction to the CDR, Eva Mariliangan (who also wrote the profile of Shalom) pointed out: "At a time when being Filipina is a political liability, when being and having to suffer indignities, Filipino Filipinos show they can bring politics to their country's. At a time when the seven Filipinas can compare up all sorts of pejorative images, these 'women's events' manifest themselves and productive solutions. They confirm that Filipinas can stand among the best in the world."

* * *

It was then fitting that to pay homage to those "founders" women senators were there, for the event was just to exalt the seven "women in the life," but also to speak of their own advocacies for women and their commitment to women's issues.

Sen. Jamby Madrigal spoke of the necessity "fight the balance" in the world by eliminating all forms of oppression against women. Sen. Loi Ejercito reasserted her own personal advocacies, from a declaration of intent to work for the passage of the draft "Magna Carta of Women" which seeks to remedy laws still legislated on women.

Senate President Manuel Villar spoke of his own personal advocacies and expressed his support for ratification of the optional protocol of Cedaw in the 13th Congress, which makes it possible for a woman who has exhausted all legal means in her own country to seek justice from the Cedaw Committee. "The protocol of Cedaw," he said, "makes the inspired to focus on women's advancement in the legislative agenda." by the way, since "the strong women in my life," beginning with his mother who taught him "to dream big and work hard," and his wife, Rep. Cynthia Villar, whom he described as "very outspoken, very intelligent," adding that these may be the reasons their marriage has lasted for almost 40 years.

ON THE same occasion, the winners of the Cedaw Supporting Contest were recognized and awarded with trophies and cash prizes. The winning song is quite titled "Pangarap ng Bawat Isa" (Dream of Each One), which starts up, in a tuneful, moving manner, all the issues that Filipinas confront and their hopes of resolving their dreams through Cedaw.

Congratulations to all the women profiled and honored in the occasion—top of that book, but more especially to the National Commission on the Role of Filipino Women (NCRFW), particularly to Chair Remedios Rikken and Executive Director Myrna Reyes-Cruz, for a memorable afternoon that showed that the struggle for equality has a long, illustrious history in this country, it is also alive and kickin'—and tireless!

Comments are welcome at rmjimenez@hotmail.com

The cardinal who made history

LOOKING BACK

Ambeth R. Ocampo

MILAN IS GENERALLY ASSOCIATED WITH THE trendy fashion, the fine arts, food and the pink toned beauties of Botticelli. Sometimes what is associated with the pre-colonial kingdom Kalantian ancient Buddhist civilization (1st century AD), the city-state Kalantian and the Gods have been declared a boon by the National Historical Institute, something or someone else must replace them.

Like an answered prayer, I found myself at a palace off Stallio called Oliver Washington to attend a meeting of the Cardinal Carlo Maria Martini who is the last Cardinal for was born. Everyone knows the cardinal master talent by the cardinal during the Marcos years, and his pastoral role in John 1 and 2, so he is not just part of Philippine history but also of the Church. I was honored to be sorry to us, but to the people of New Washington he remains the kindly "Tatay" and is entertained with affection rather than awe.

During the presentation of the historical marker to the cardinal, I made the mistake how to cause his cardinal of referring to the name as my husband of being cardinal, it was hoped that my mistake would become a reality. Magalang replied his name, I was told. I replied that Ramon in Tagalog or del Norte looks every inch college years, as how he is not only a cardinal but also since Saint was exiled there, it was permanently a sky. Thus, the town of New Washington may not have the physical and material resources required of a full-fledged city but because one of their illustrious sons made Philippine history, perhaps it could be declared a city by an act of Congress or the Senate.

Antonio L. Colmenar Cinta donated the impressive bronze statue of the cardinal that now stands in the town plaza facing the church. The cardinal is depicted in his bishop's garb wearing a miter and holding a staff with his left hand while the right hand is poised in benign a blessing. It is an impressive monument, except by one disproportional detail. Since the monument has no coin or currency in the world of politics, the former ambassador to the Holy See, etc. etc. It was nothing to new members about the cardinal and his big military win and sense of humor. (always wondered why politics and military men have these, Brothers and cardinals of the late 19th century were simple men and women who made history. They were just they senses I human before we made them saints, but not with the assumption of wisdom and sense.

At New Washington, we heard stories about Amo. Some were humorous, others touching. He attended a huge cauldron to cook a stand. He carried love a while, went out and swanned with a big cauldron and flowered.

There, there was the man who couldn't go to the cardinal's confessional because he didn't have a decent pair of pants. Amo gave him his own pants and helped they fit.

I met Cardinal Mr. Rivkin. Time to receive a Catholic Mass Media Award and another time as minister to the Catholic Archdiocese. Amo, we were quick impressions, photo opportunities. What was special was when I accompanied the Abbot of Montserrat on a courtesy call and was surprised that our cardinal, who was of Chinese ancestry, spoke fluent and perfect Spanish. He asked for our visit, and we talked about Spain and upcoming appointees. It was a joke to him but you, for know Rivkin we left he opened his desk drawer, searching for sweets to gift everyone present—from tourists and navigators as a rule of habit. Obviously, Amo were tempted gifts, but they were things he could not accept. Ha, I wished I would get a rosary, the lowest or poor units, but I think I got the day old bagoo.

Seeing the monument and historical marker in Abbot left work made me remember Amo from long meetings with lawyers and made me wonder how seeing the cardinal in person was good enough.

* * *

Comments are welcome at aocampo@famnet.com

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[illegible] hereby given that the following companies/employers have filed with this Regional Office applications for Alien Employment Permits:

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[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]

INQUIRER Northern Luzon

Lilia Jun Bandayrel
Sunna Cruz/Rolando B. Fernandez

Pampanga honors Augustinian legacies

By Tonnie Dreyo
City of San Fernando

KAPAMPANGAN PEOPLE filled the San Agustin Church and its nearby museum in Intramuros, Manila, on the night of Aug. 24 to pay tribute to Augustinian missionaries who had sailed from there to Pampanga 405 years ago and influenced the natives' character, culture and history.

As they stood on the same grounds where some of those 100 friars lived and trained in, they bridged the time, seeing past and present connections between Fray Juan Gallegos, who set foot in Lubao in 1572, and his kin, for down time when Fr. Eddie Abellera, who finished theology at the St. Augustine Major Seminary, was elected governor in 2007.

"Holy ground," was how Dr. Arlyn Vil Isaserva, president of the Holy Angel University, called the event's venue.

By the way the tributes and the celebration of continuing collaboration lighted up, the people meant to remember the Augustinian hallmark beyond white robes and unlettered scholarship.

Their "enduring legacies" are the Roman Catholic faith and values, heritage churches and architectural knowledge, schools and education institutions, publications that domesticated the language and culture, ecclesiastical arts and culinary traditions, said San Fernando Archbishop Pedrito Ramirez as the Mass he celebrated with Bishop Roberto Mallari and eight priests.

Other legacies are the archival documents, the solidarity of friars with the faithful in times of wars, calamities and epidemics, the opening of roads, and their engineering acumen in provide irrigation to farmers.

The orator of the Augustinians' work and the breadth of their influence spoke of the fervor with which the pioneers had lived out the lifeless of their founder, St. Augustine, that "our hearts are restless until they rest in (God)," said Fray Francisco Munoz, archivist and researcher of the Link Center for Kapampangan Studies, which organized the exhibits.

Ramirez said the Archdiocese of San Fernando was "most profoundly grateful for the gift of faith" because it molded the people in adverse times like Mt. Pinatubo's 1991 eruptions and the lingering disaster it spawned for seven years.

That gift, he said, had flourished because revered Kapampangans, like Stellar Cardinal Sin, the first Filipino-cardinal, became church pioneers themselves.

In gratitude, the provincial board presented a copy of Resolution No. 941 to Fr. Wilfrido Anido, OSA, vicar of the Order of the Philippines, Augustinian Province, and to Alvaro Iriarte, charge d'affaires of the Spanish Embassy.

The resolution praises "their contributions and heroic to the first missionaries of the Calced Order of Saint Augustine for their pioneering efforts in Pampanga and for their role in the preservation of the culture."

That made Pampanga, the first and last Augustinian territory in Luzon until 1980, eligible for the province to the Philippines to officially thank the Spanish missionaries who labored in the country during colonial times," said Bobby Tantingco, the center's executive director.

One of the high points was the launch of the English translations of Fray Diego Bergaño's two books, the "Arte de la Lengua Pampanga" (1729 Kapampangan Grammar) and the "Vocabulario de Pampanga" (1732 Kapampangan Dictionary).

Bergaño and his collaborator then, Ivon Juan Zuñiga of Mexico town, managed to reach out to the present through the translations of Fr. Guillermo Asunes and Fr. Vicente Inumerable.

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THE PHILIPPINE COUNCILORS LEAGUE

PCL WEEK CELEBRATION
"Anniversary Years of Bringing the Regions Bonding the Nation"
SEPTEMBER 1-7, 2007

CDUV. ABUCAY B. REYNOSO, JR.
Interim National President
*Ilocos, Ilocos

IT IS WITH GREAT PRIDE AND PRIVILEGE that I greet my colleagues within the Philippine Councilors League (PCL) as it marks the start of its week-long celebration of Philippine Councilors Week.

Seventeen years since its founding on September 7, 1990, the PCL remains steadfast in its sworn duty to be the precursor of development programs in the local government level through its legislative undertakings and its policy makers.

We desire to celebrate our founding anniversary with week-long activities which include among others the simultaneous tree planting, dental-medical missions, and the giving of recognition to the country's outstanding farmers, teachers, policemen and other civilian units.

As active participants in the governance of local government units and in nation-building as a whole, the PCL is now conducting simultaneous elections nationwide as part of organizing its provincial, regional and national organization. The first quarter of 2008 shall witness the emergence of a new set of officers of the national local city shall continue to pursue the noble vision of the PCL of bringing an empowered foundation of governance that will serve as catalyst towards progress of people within a sustainable environment for a strong and united Philippines.

The Philippine Councilors league is now one of the most if not the strongest league in the country. Its liquidity is the envy of other leagues thus giving it the financial muscle to implement its various programs aimed at extending multiple benefits to its bona fide members. The steady increase in membership and equity makes it possible for the league to innovate programs whose end result will be to the welfare of its members.

Finally, I am proud and happy to announce that indeed your league is in good hands under our vigilant leadership.

Long live PCL! Mabuhay!

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THE PHILIPPINE COUNCILORS LEAGUE (PCL) is the realization of a dream to empower local legislators by uniting our members and by providing them with opportunities for effective capacity building as we address platforms of concerns in our respective communities. It's a dream that has benefited, and continues to benefit, our members throughout the country.

The resplendent history of astonishing growth and enduring hope in our communities is the remarkable feat of young men and women fired up by the ideals of creating positive change in their corner of the world.

Investing in our shared dreams is all about making the lives of the Filipino people better. The current reality holds that there is hope for the Philippines, and that we hold a vibrant future in our hands. The Philippine Councilors League has so much to offer. The vast yet inadequately tapped potential is here.

17 years have gone by.

We still believe we can.

PCL NATIONAL SECRETARIAT

OUR VISION

"PCL is an empowered foundation of governance that serves as catalyst towards progress of people within a sustainable environment for a strong and united Philippines."

adopted during the PCL President's Assembly on September 29-30, 2006 at Sun Fiesta Hotel, Tagaytay City

OUR COVENANT

The PCL firmly believes that the preservation of the general welfare of the country and the delivery of basic services to the constituents necessitates a better utilization of and through a genuine, effective and productive local autonomy and the enhancement of self-reliance, as PCL shall work with the blessings and guidance of the Father of all mankind.

OUR PHILOSOPHY

The PCL is committed to vigorously pursue its mandate through:

* Observance of the Rule of Law;
* Sharing of resources and experiences beneficial to the constituents; and
* Adherence to the principles of subsidiarity and collective governance.

Across the NATION

₱75-M project bleeds coffers of RP's biggest power co-op

LIPA CITY—HOW CAN A NINE-DAY OLD COMPANY with a paid-up capital of only ₱62,500 bankroll a ₱75-million computerization project of the country's biggest electric cooperative?

For more than two years now, loud-and-clear complaints of the Batangas II Electric Cooperative (Batelec II) have yet to hear any logical explanation from the co-op's board of directors on this query.

"Panic whatkwen nop you look at it, the contract is grossly disadvantageous and onerous to the co-op," study committee member Ernesto Capistrano, the current general manager of the power co-op.

Capistrano was referring to stipulations in the contract which the 15 members of the electric co-op's board of directors somehow signed with a company called Hitachi Technologies Inc. (Hitachi).

The idea for the computerization program came in 2005 after the election of the 15 members of the board of directors.

Reynaldo Panaligan was then voted as president of the board.

A resident of Mataas-na-kahoy, Panaligan is also a reporter for the Manila Bulletin covering the justice beat.

Anomalous project

With a monthly average sale of P560 million and over 180,000 member-consumers, Batelec II is considered the biggest electric cooperative in the country.

But the electric co-op was cash-strapped.

In 2005, Batelec II had a total loan of over P500 million.

Despite the co-op's financial woes, the board deemed the project necessary. Through a resolution, the directors awarded the computerization program to Hitachi with a budget of P75 million on April 15, 2004.

Under the contract, signed by Panaligan and 14 other members of the board of Batelec II, the co-op will pay P2 million a month, with P3 million as the last payment for 26 months.

Concerned consumers found that Hitachi was registered with the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) on April 6, 2004, or nine days before it bagged the multimillion-peso project.

They also found that the company, with business address on Red Flower Compound, Barangay Dela Paz, Pasig City, has a ₱62,500 in paid-up capital.

They learned that the board spent P6.3 million for 18 boom trucks that were bought for P400,000 although they cost just about P300,000 each.

Audit report

These prompted the consumers to seek the National Electrification Administration for an audit.

On March 18, 2005, a NEA audit team revealed there was no bidding for the computerization project.

It said it was done with "undue haste" without a technical study and that it wasn't the rule of Panaligan and the other directors to award projects.

The awarding of contracts, it said, was the sole function of the bids and awards committee.

It found that the project was not built upon the specifications provided for by the board members.

The NEA also found that the bidding for the 10 boom trucks was rigged to favor one company.

Graft cases

On May 11, 2005, a group of consumers sued the 22 directors for graft.

Aside from Panaligan, named respondents were Isagani Catalino, Ursario Gutierrez, Celso Landicho, Dra. Marcelo, Jane Real-Reyes, Clarissa Sheen, Eduardo Tagle, Ruben Quintana, Ernesto Hernandez, Inocencio Manuel and Tirso Ramos.

Magpies from the 15 member-pallies in the co-op's service area also filed a similar complaint.

Panaligan and his 21 co-accused denied any wrongdoing. Madam Ramos, Inquirer Southern Luzon

Ifugao gov wages war on 'jueteng,' corruption

IFUGAO, IFUGAO—JUST LIKE the freedom fighters who handled the Tiger of Malaya, Japanese Gen. Yamashita Yamabuta, from Ifugao in 1945, Gov. Teodoro Baguilat Jr. on Sunday vowed to rid the province of corruption and jueteng.

Addressing 400 war veterans and their families during the commemoration here of Victory Day when Yamashita surrendered to end World War II in Asia, Baguilat warned his collectors and representatives, and even governors, to stop jueteng or "we will banish you the way our grandparents banished Yamashita from Ifugao 62 years ago."

New war

It was on Sept. 2, 1945 when Yamashita came down from his mountain hideout in Benguet town to surrender to Filipino and American forces in Ifugao.

"That ended the war and ushered in an era of peace to the country," Baguilat told the crowd that joined the aging war veterans in remembering the end of World War II.

"Today we are fighting a different kind of war ... against poverty, illiteracy and corruption," he said.

He said it would need the official political will and community help to fight corruption, illegal gambling and jueteng.

Guerrilla tactics

He asked the police and the community to support his campaign against jueteng, which he called a "guerrilla war."

"My mother was shot battle within the occupation of the community ... Our veterans survived the last war because they were supported by the community who hid them from the Japanese and provided them food and information," he said.

"Now, if the members of the police continue to let us jueteng and will not report the activities to the authorities, then we cannot do anything."

Baguilat said it was ironic that the Japanese, the enemies of Filipinos in the last war, are now among Ifugao's biggest supporters.

Ironies

He cited the provincial prosecutor's record that Japanese are now supporting Ifugao "into the projects on maternal and child health now supported by the Japan International Cooperation Agency and the Ambassador sure hydro power supported by the Tokyo Power Electric Corp."

Baguilat also said there are plans to put up a Japanese tea plantation in Ifugao, and to sell ikat, an old Ifu-Gat fabric to tiny jackets, to Japanese and Taiwanese women in Subic and Metro Manila. Inquirer Northern Luzon

GMA firm: Build interchange at Pampanga SCTEx

CLARK FREEPORT—PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo's directive to the Bases Conversion Development Authority to build an additional interchange at the Pampanga side of the Subic-Clark-Tarlac Expressway became clear on Monday.

Secretary Cesar Buenaseda, director general of the Presidential Management Staff, instructed BCDA president Narciso Abaya to submit an implementation report for monitoring purposes.

The PMS released on Monday the copy of Buenaseda's Aug. 23 memorandum to the Advisory Committee of Central Luzon (ADCL), which, together with Mayor Gen. Jonaller Cunias, had lobbied for the Petac-Angeles-City interchange to further improve the access of the "SCTEX 11."

Beneficiaries

The SCTEX 11 refers to eight towns and three cities located along the 93.77-km. highway being built on a ₱23.06-billion loan from the Japanese government and a ₱6-billion counterpart by the BCDA.

The ADCL is organized by the SCTEx 11 to help local governments of Dinalupihan and Hermosa in Bataan; Mexico(Dolores, Porac, Lubao, Mabalacat (minus Dau and Sapang) and San Fernando cities in Pampanga; and Bamban, Concepcion and Tarlac City in Tarlac, to develop a growth area that may be spun by the economic activities in the Subic and Clark Freeports and Luzon Industrial Park.

Fund search

Mr. Arroyo first gave the directive to build the interchange when she led the groundbreaking rites for Texas Instruments on Aug. 30 in Clark.

Mrs. Arroyo directed then Budget Secretary Abaya and the Pampanga "would initially seek the BCDA between ₱300 million and ₱500 million.

He said the Department of Public Works and Highways would have to shell out its own funds to build a "mini-fare, bump-free road" next to the interchange.

Abaya said a general survey of the area would be done after the meeting of officials of the DCDA and the Subic-Clark Alliance for Development Council.

He said the construction of the interchange would not alter the schedule of the opening of the SCTEx after March 2008.

Long delay

The NCDA has extended the November deadline of the Kajima-Obayashi-JFE Engineering-Mitsubishi Heavy Industries Ltd. Joint Venture to March of to the Japanese consortium failed to finish its work on time.

It allowed the Aug. 10 deadline of the Hanjin Heavy Industries Shipbuilding Co. to be declared for 56 days more until October.

The delay in SCTEX's work was attributed to its failure to bring in equipment.

The additional interchange would bring to seven the total number of interchanges along the Pampanga Tarlac section of the SCTEx. The Bataan-Pampanga has only two interchanges.

Much of the SCTEx interchanges are on the Pampanga-Tarlac side because it is deemed as the "most busy" segment in terms of the movement of cargo and passengers at the Diosdado Macapagal International Airport in Clark, according to Robert Gervasio, SCTEx manager for operational support. Tonette Orejas, Inquirer Central Luzon

POOR work by Japanese contractors led to asphalt overlays like this on the Concepcion, Tarlac side of the SCTEx that has been ordered repaired by the government. CHRISTINE AMANPULO

2 bombs jar Zambo markets; no one injured

ZAMBOANGA CITY—TWO crude bombs went off 30 minutes apart at the public markets here early yesterday but no injuries were reported, authorities said.

The blasts occurred at 4:30 a.m. and 5 a.m. at the Tetuan Public Market and the Barangay Canelar Public Market, respectively, police said.

Police blamed the terror group Abu Sayyaf for the Aug. 23 blast.

Lily Gacayan, city administrator, said the bombs were detonated with an explosion at the public restaurant extension along Lantawan Street around 4:30 a.m.

He said he saw them to check when another explosion occurred.

Senior Supt. Manuel Barcenas, city police director, said the second explosion occurred at the mid-section of the old public market around 4:35 a.m.

"Still no one was here but a damaged some vegetables," he said.

Barcenas described the explosions as mild.

"Pieces of evidence showed that improvised explosive devices were used but these were made of crude materials," he said.

Barcenas said the main ingredients were powder from the ammunition and pentolite.

Magpies said they found an unexploded grenade at the Canelar Public Market.

Magpies said they found an unexploded grenade at the Canelar Public Market.

Barcenas said witnesses reported seeing a young man, probably 18 years old, leave two bags at the blast area about 15 minutes before the explosions.

"We thought the explosions were caused by firecrackers," said Augustine Bartolo, a civil source. Julie Alipala, Inquirer Mindanao

Gov to probe claims NPA rebs' surrender was fraudulent

ILAGEL, ISABELA—GEN. Miguel Enriquez has pledged to investigate claims that the recent surrender of communist rebels in Sitio Alegria, Tanal, Ragay and Pug-nay villages, as announced by the military was fraudulent.

Earlier, the military said 69 New People's Army (NPA) rebels and sympathizers decided to join the mainstream of society but instead of difficulty in living in the hinterlands.

But one of those who was supposed to have surrendered told the Inquirer they were apparently tricked by the military.

He said on Aug. 30, they were called down by the military in Sitio Away from their villages as they used Ilegalan their firearms.

Gun owners

He said they were hesitant at first to surrender to convince them, but they later decided to again because they wanted to legalize their firearms.

"But I was surprised when they announced that we were rebels. There were some real rebels with us but there were only five of them," said the source, who spoke on conditions of anonymity for fear of reprisal from the NPA.

He said most of those that the military claimed to be rebels were ordinary villagers, who kept guns for protection.

Enriquez could not be reached for comment.

> 'I was surprised when they announced that we were rebels...'

Another surrender

In Bulacan-on City, authorities announced the surrender of an alleged communist rebel in Legalan this Sunday.

Cpl. Victor Tay, commander of the 56th Infantry Battalion, said Elmer Torres of the NPA's Front 51 based in Sta. Cruz, Isabela did not surrendered with his girlfriend on Aug. 31.

Tay said Torres was among a group of communist rebels that stormed the Magpet town police station in July 2006 and took off with 30 firearms.

In Limasawa, Lanao del Norte, police authorities said 60 persons of Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) rebels under Abdullah Sinsuyan, alias Commander Bravo have left him to return to the MILF.

Livelihood

Insp. Xavier Ulysses Manrampan, Limasawa police chief, said the reasons that Bravo has some 1,000 men under his command.

"Commander Bravo has already some of his men to find a living to support their families," Manrampan said.

The Inquirer tried but failed to contact Bravo.

But a rebel official said it was normal for their members to seek the financial survival of their families.

"What is wrong with that? Besides, we are not fighting the government because of the ceasefire so they have all the time to make a living. They are on standby and are willing to go back to duty when the situation worsens," said Ed Ishalak, chief of the MILF's Central Committee. Apolinario Arnaldo, Geoffrey Mantaro and Rachel Uriarte, Inquirer Mindanao

AFP Chief of Staff Hermogenes Esperon Jr. inspects firearms turned over by 69 supposedly NPA guerrillas who surrendered to military authorities.

ELBOWROOM? Bro. Mike Velarde (left) presides over the discussion on the structures and concerns that will guide the Bishops-Legislators caucus in Makati on Tuesday. With him are Pampanga Archbishop Paciano Aniceto (left), Speaker Jose de Venecia, Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines president and Jaro Archbishop Angel Lagdameo, Senate President Manny Villar and Sen. Aquilino Pimentel Jr.

Top official confirms gov't eyeing Erap pardon

From page A1

overdraft. Why should they expect trouble whenever is the decision of the Sandiganbayan? After all, President Estrada submitted himself to the jurisdiction, him believing in its fairness," Velarde told the Inquirer.

In another ex-Estrada aide, who is under house arrest at his mansion center in Tanay, Rizal, is expected this month.

"Let's wait and see what the decision will be because we cannot talk about pardon until there is a verdict. After the verdict comes out, maybe we can discuss that," said Nieto, who had also served as Estrada's interior secretary.

He refused to comment on a Social Weather Stations survey showing that respondents in Metro Manila and four neighboring provinces were in favor of a presidential pardon for Estrada. *(See related story on Page A11.)*

On Monday Ms Arroyo appointed Nieto to concurrently serve as her adviser on political affairs "indefinitely". Nieto replaced National Security Adviser Norberto Gonzales, who was assigned last week to oversee the political affairs office vacated by Secretary Leonard Claudio for health reasons.

Lunch meeting

Gonzales noted that disclosed a lunch meeting has been with Estrada on the latter's pardon issue, wherein he told the detained ex-President not to listen to parties wanting to launch another destabilization move against the government.

Shrugging off the question of whether Estrada had sought a pardon should the Sandiganbayan render he conviction, Gonzales said neither he nor his lunch host had made any commitment, or proposed a deal.

"It was just an exchange of views," Gonzales said upon emerging from a National Security Council Cabinet Group meeting in Malacañang. He said one of the things they discussed was Estrada's dismay at not being able to resolve the communist insurgency during the latter's term.

Gonzales also said Ms Arroyo had nothing to do with the resolving Estrada's case, and that he had not even told her about it.

'Not worried'

Gonzales told reporters that he did not see any "real destabilization" happening to coincide with the Sandiganbayan's decision and that, at any rate, authorities were "prepared" to deal with it.

"So I can say we're not worried," he said, adding that he was flying to Australia last night ahead of the President's for the Sept. 8-9 Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation meeting.

"It's all safe," he said.

Asked whether Mr. Arroyo's trip to Australia on Thursday was an indication that everything was okay, Gonzales said: "Was our passport in that way. With that kind of meeting, it will have to be very, very serious to advise her not to go."

Gonzales said he had told Estrada "previously not to listen to those proposing to destabilize the government."

"Nagkakamayhaday lang yan. Inaaway lang ang pera rito (They just want to make money. Its money will just go to waste)," Gonzales said.

"I told him that in the final analysis, whether he is acquitted or not, his actions after the fact will be, I think, the basis of the judgment by the people.

"It's up to him if he wants an extreme decision to help to uphold the country's best interest."

Political maturity

Velarde said he believed that Filipinos were "politically mature" and would accept any decision of the Sandiganbayan "for as long as (it) is based on its presentation from any side."

He called on all sectors to stay all speculations on the Estrada verdict, including the possibility of a pardon.

"Everybody should just wait for the decision of the Sandiganbayan. Everything is speculative, as if certain groups are preempting or anticipating or in a way influencing the decision of the Sandiganbayan. I believe the justices will decide on the merits of the case," he said.

Sought for comment on Velarde's "overkill" remark, Marine commandant Maj. Gen. Ernesto Delos Santos said in a phone patch interview with reporters: "We are just being cautious, and what we have in mind is the general interest of the public, to maintain peace, order and stability in the National Capital Region (NCR)."

"Even if we overreact, it pays because it's the interest of the people that is at stake."

Delos Santos also said the Armed Forces' deployment of 400 soldiers for anti-riot operations "does not have the feeling that we did it to be handed down and not "overkill" because the AFP was also preparing for "all possible contingencies," including destabilization attempts, civil disturbances, terrorism and calamities.

4 campaigns

Delos Santos, the outgoing chief of the AFP-NCR Command, said two civil disturbance messages—from the "Hello Garci" tapes and in the testimony of the Senate graftbusters and another two, around Hacienda Luisita. (Our estimate is composed of around 300 soldiers.)

"The majority of the available Marines will be on standby in their respective camps. In case the situation deteriorates, there are other security measures that we will put in place, like probably conducting checkpoints in major entries leading in the NCR," he said.

Not to be outdone, the Philippine National Police said it would secure any demonstrator causing trouble on Judgment Day.

PNP Director General Oscar Calderon said he would prefer that pro-Estrada rallies be held in the freedom parks.

"I hope they will not cause any trouble. I wish they will not go to the streets to protest because it will infringe on the rights of other persons ... The moment they cause trouble, we will arrest them. Those are my instructions," Calderon said.

"We expect that the decision will be fair to everybody, so our duty as law enforcers is to ensure that Metro Manila is peaceful. We ask the (demonstrators) to hold their protests in the proper venues," he said.

Anxiety

Besides a presidential pardon, Malacañang has raised the possibility of including Estrada in its amnesty proposal.

Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita had earlier told Inquirer that the Palace was putting together a general amnesty for all "enemies of the state."

He said that since the Ramos administration, no such amnesty proclamation had been given to Gregorio Honasan.

"Now as part of the peace process, we feel that it will be very helpful that those fighting the government will be looking forward to that, especially if they know the government will give (an amnesty) to (them) ... as they become good citizens," Ermita said.

In an earlier interview, Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez, who took a leave from work for health reasons last week, said: "It's a prerogative both of the President and Congress, so the President cannot have amnesty without Congress approving it."

Speaker Jose de Venecia has also proposed amnesty, not a pardon, for Estrada. With reports from Gil C. Cabacungan Jr., Abbie Dizon and Alexis Romero

Beliefs, not money, behind Couples split

From page A1

Kalinga, (SC's tragedy successful housing programs, admitted, however, that the allegations of mismanaged funds had been made by the group of Frank Penilla, one of the co-founders of CIC in 1981.

But the allegations were "all said in general," Tale said yesterday at the Bulong Pulongan hotel in Manila. "Maybe if there was something specific. Investment, we can properly respond."

Penilla is in the process of forming a new group—the CIC Foundation for Family and Life.

Tale said the main issue that had caused the rift within CIC was not so much money as the differences in the members' beliefs in their work and vocation.

"Substantially, it was the fundamental differences in the way we see the kind of work we are doing for the group ... People are called differently to pursue different tasks," he said.

Transparency

Gawad Kalinga finance head Mike Cano also said in an interview that despite the allegations of fund mismanagement, "the money part is a small issue."

He added: "Even the bishops [who had met with CIC in an attempt to defuse the mounting tensions among its members] said that it was not about the money."

Tale pointed out that the management of funds donated to Gawad Kalinga had been and continued to be transparent. He said those who wished to look into the matter needed only to check the Gawad Kalinga website.

Cano said the accounting firm Isla Lipana & Co., a member of the accounting giant Pricewaterhouse Coopers International Limited, had been auditing Gawad Kalinga since Day One.

On top of this and as part of the process of transparency, Gawad Kalinga recently sought the assistance of another top-ranking firm, Sycip Gorres & Velayo (SGV), to conduct another audit of the housing program's processes and identify possible areas for improvement.

Cano said the SGV findings, which included a few suggestions for improvement, were generally positive.

Accountability

In an earlier interview, Nasuog Carreroza, one of the founding members of CIC, threw his comment and a former member of the Board of Elders of the International Council of the CIC Foundation for Family and Life, said they had not accused Gawad Kalinga of misspending Fund donations.

"We've did we say that there's an anomaly. We only said there should be proper governance and accountability," he said, adding.

"When the money you are handling is not yours, there should be greater governance and accountability. The disbursements should jibe with the number of houses promised to partners."

Carreroza said he and his group had raised the issue of proper accountability because of instances when some Gawad Kalinga partners complained directly to their group about purported mismanagement of the donated funds.

Commitment

According to Gawad Kalinga executive director Luis Oquinena, the group's current concern is to maintain the faith in the work that it set out to do with the housing projects.

"The issue is bigger than [former Gawad Kalinga executive director Antonio] Meloto and Nelilla," Oquinena said. "Our Kalinga neighborhoods that already rose, ang mga nakatanggap sa aming programa, they are the ones affected."

Oquinena cited reports of CIC volunteers in Gawad Kalinga communities who had left their posts because of confusion over the split.

He said it was important for Gawad Kalinga and CIC as a whole to announce the lay movement's commitment to God. "Ito ito maaaliw ang iba pero. "Mahalagang ipaalam sa kanila na sa Gawad Kalinga, walang aatrasan. Patong tatong sapo di sa."

AMMA

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7:00-9:30pm: EVENING PROGRAM w/ Swamiji (video, spiritual talk, devotional singing, meditation)

Sunday, September 9

10:00am-6:00pm: INTEGRATED AMRITA MEDITATION Course (Part 1)

6:00pm-7:00pm: Q&A with Swamiji about meditation and spiritual life

7:30pm onwards: EVENING PROGRAM (video, spiritual talk, devotional singing)

Monday, September 10

5:00pm-10:00pm: INTEGRATED AMRITA MEDITATION Course (Part 2)

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 5, 2007

NEWS

NSC approves amnesty for Reds

By Michael Lim Ubac

THE NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL yesterday formally approved the grant of amnesty to communist rebels who will be willing to lay down their arms, a move expected to hasten the conclusion of the stalled peace negotiations with the communist-led National Democratic Front (NDF).

The amnesty to be issued by presidential proclamation, would also cover party-list representatives charged with rebellion for their alleged involvement in a conspiracy to overthrow the government in February 2006, according to Jesus Dureza, the presidential adviser for peace and national security adviser Norberto Gonzales.

President Macapagal-Arroyo, who presided over the NSC meeting, said Congress would need to appropriate an initial P500 million to bankroll a nationwide amnesty program.

She said the money would "hasten a stable peace and security in the region, with the local and religious officials at the helm, supported by the entire national government."

Amnesty livelihood

"Included in the peace framework are amnesty and livelihood for the rebels who will return to the fold of the law," said Mr. Dureza in Filipino.

"This is what this country needs: reforms in the economy, peace and stable politics," said the President, calling on the rebels to "unite" to end political bickering, instability and rebellions that have discouraged foreign investments.

Dureza told reporters that the amnesty need be "concurred in" by both chambers of Congress for it to be legal and binding.

"The President issues the proclamation after which it goes to Congress for further deliberations, and then concurrence by majority votes," he said.

He said the NSC meeting, which was followed by a full Cabinet meeting, has already wrapped up discussions on the planned amnesty for the New People's Army, the armed wing of the Communist Party of the Philippines.

The NSC headed by CPP founder Jose Ma. Sison and Luis Jalandoni, is the political arm of the CPP/NPA.

"I think the amnesty issue has already been pretty much agreed upon. It's a matter of finalizing the document which the President has directed Secretary Dureza to undertake because the NEC cluster has already basically approved the amnesty recommendation for the President," said Interior Secretary Ronaldo Puno.

No ceasefire

Armed Forces chief of Staff Gen. Hermogenes Esperon Jr. said he was for amnesty for the communists but only if they surrender their arms and denounce the armed struggle.

He ruled out any ceasefire once the amnesty law goes into effect.

"There will be no ceasefire as far as I understand it [because if the communists] want to take advantage of the social integration program, then all they have to do is apply for it, [and] surrender their firearms. Then they will be given livelihood assistance," said Esperon.

Dureza, who was given the task of drafting the amnesty proclamation, said close to be considered are members of the "15[illegible] NDF and other communist rebel groups."

He said the amnesty could extend to leftist party-list representatives led by Saint Dominic of the Basay Mata party-list group so it would cover the rebellion and other crimes relating to "the pursuit of political beliefs."

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Pasig loses claim to Meralco tax

'No ordinance filed to back demand'

By Lolo B. Saisorra

THE PASIG CITY GOVERNMENT HAS LOST ITS BID TO CLAIM P455 million in franchise tax from the Manila Electric Company because it did not have a valid ordinance to support its demand.

In its Aug. 20 decision, the Court of Appeals overturned the ruling of a lower court which declared as valid the city government's demand for the payment of the franchise tax from 1998 to 1999, saying there was no legal basis for its collection since there was no ordinance mandating it.

The appellate court pointed out that the demand for payment was based on Section 32, Article I of Ordinance 25 which was issued in 1992 when Pasig was still a municipality. Under the ordinance, all business owners carried out through a franchise were required to franchise taxes to the local government.

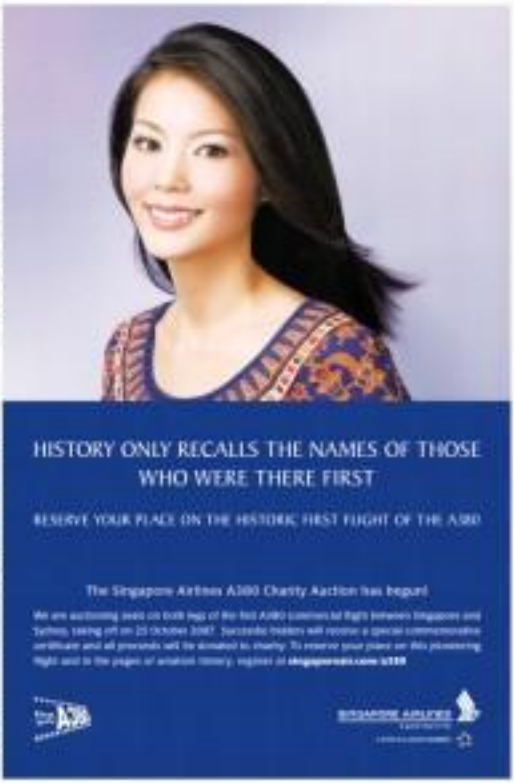
But the ordinance was later nullified since municipalities are not empowered to impose and collect the tax. Cities, on the other hand, are allowed to collect franchise taxes under the local government code.

According to the court, Pasig's subsequent conversion into a city did not mean that it could automatically collect the tax since it did not enact an ordinance authorizing it to do so.

"Here, it is not disputed that since Pasig was converted into a city it has not enacted a new ordinance for the imposition of a franchise tax ... Since the Municipality of Pasig had no authority to enact the said ordinance, it would not be a valid basis for the City of Pasig to assess and collect the franchise tax in question," the court said.

It pointed out that Republic Act 7829, which turned Pasig into a city, did not contain a provision that would validate Ordinance 25.

"Simply put, there is nothing in section 46 of RA 7829 that validates the ordinance in question; thus section 32, article I of said ordinance remains illegal, without force and effect. Therefore, until an appropriate ordinance is enacted by the legislative body of the City of Pasig, it is without legal ground to demand from the appellant the payment of a franchise tax," the court said.



Doctor who brought Cris to hospital to show up at NBI

By Tina G. Santos, Jeannette I. Andrade and Ofelia T. Maltuf Jr., Inquirer Visayas Luzon

THE DOCTOR WHO BROUGHT SUSPECTED hazing victim Cris Andaya Morales to the Veterans Memorial Medical Center in Quezon City yesterday said he would present himself to the National Bureau of Investigation today.

Special Investigator III Roger LA Vasquez of the NBI Anti-Terrorism Division said Dr. Francisco Cruz Jr., the assistant chief of the VMMC ophthalmology department, gave them this assurance when they served him a subpoena to his house in Quezon City.

Vasquez said they also served a subpoena on Ateneo trainee, said to be a member of the Sigma Rho fraternity, the group Morales, a student of the University of the Philippines in Diliman, Quezon City, reportedly joined before his death.

Morales was brought to the hospital by Cruz and several other people on Aug. 27. He was declared dead on arrival and the findings of an autopsy report showed that he was beaten up quite badly because of the numerous bruises all over his body.

Also expected to appear before the NBI at around 10 a.m. today are Dr. Daphne Oseña, the VMMC doctor who examined him and Ariel Paolo Santos, the National College of Public Administration and Governments student-council chair and Regina Rhu member who was reportedly the last person seen with Morales when he was still alive.

Recruited

According to the bureau, they received information that it was Ante who recruited Morales into the fraternity.

Sources explained, however, that they were not considering Cruz and the others as suspects.

"They are merely sources of vital information. We invited them to shed light on the case. It's up to them if they want to come. At least we gave them the chance. They can't blame us that we did not give them the chance to set their side," he said.

Initiation

A member of the Sigma Rho yesterday told the police that his son Morales to a house in Quezon City where the fraternity was allegedly conducting initiation rites for neophytes.

DOCTOR, A2B

Dump truck slams into Makati City house; 11 hurt

By DJ Yap

A QUIET EVENING IN A MAKATI City household turned into a night of tragedy when a 10-wheeler truck plowed into a house in East Bembo, causing injuries to 11 people, including two baby girls.

Eight of those injured were members of the house at 928-G 6th Avenue. A wall of the two-story structure collapsed because of the impact, police said. The truck driver and two of his helpers were also hurt in the accident.

The victims were Noel Mercia, 24; his wife Maria Rhea, 19; their 2-month-old daughter Maria Lowela; Charito Cañagas, 52; her children Charlyn, 7; Cherry Ann, 6, and 6-month-old Charnel; Melanie Carreon, 28; driver Jimrale Borga, 22, and his helpers, Benjo Hombreramos, 19 and Rizaldino Barrozo, 36.

It took rescue workers three hours to retrieve all the victims from the rubble and stab them to the Orpital ng Makati, said SPO2 Mike Ormillo of the city police's traffic enforcement unit.

Fortunately, most of them, including the girls, suffered only scratches and bruising, Ormillo said. Except for Noel Mercia, who remained under observation, all were in stable condition, he added.

A report said Borga was driving a dump truck loaded with sand and gravel on the southbound lane of C-5 Road and headed toward South Superhighway when a passenger jeepney blew off at an intersection.

Trying to avoid the jeeping Borga maneuvered to the left, but he lost control of the vehicle and crashed into the Mercias' house.

Dreamline said charges of reckless imprudence resulting in multiple physical injuries and damage to property were being readied against Borga.

A WAYWARD truck plows into a house on C-5 Road corner Kalayaan Avenue in Makati City, injuring family members who were having a quiet dinner before tragedy struck.

Manila policemen go on mall tour—of a different kind

By Tina G. Santos

MEMBERS OF THE MANILA Police District are in the middle of a mall tour—not to check out what's on sale but to watch shoplifters hone in on them in the presence of bombs in their respective bombshelters.

Senior Supt. Danilo Abarintos, acting MPD chief, said members of the Explosives and Ordnance Division were now going around department stores to conduct lectures about bomb ingredients and components.

The police in Metro Manila have been on full alert for weeks as a precaution against possible terrorist attacks in the metropolis after the military launched an offensive against the Abu Sayyaf in Mindanao.

"Security officers are being taught about the types of wires and electronic components that are usually used in bomb making and assembly," Abarintos said.

A bomb expert said they were dismayed to discover that mall guards do not know what they are looking for when they check the bags of customers, usually with a stick.

Retired Antonio, 45, a guard at a Mandaluyong mall who attended the MPD seminars, said he and the other guards would now be able to conduct a more thorough inspection of customers' bags, although this could result in longer lines as the customer of establishments. "But we don't want it the mall goers complain," Antonio said. "We've only doing our job and this is for their own good. It's as simple as that."

After the mall tour, the MPD will conduct a "campus tour," this time, targeting the guards detailed in schools.

METROBRIEFS

Man shot dead in QC

THE BODY OF GUARD had to the discovery of the body of a 25-year-old man on Monday night. Reinerio Jr. of Fairmont Subdivision in Barangay Tandang Sora was found the body of Tetting Sanoy their neighbor, on Baker Street. He had been shot several times. PO3 Edwin de la Cruz of the Quezon City Police District said that they found three empty cal. .45 pistol shells at the site. De la Cruz said that the victim's brother told them Sanoy had argued last week with another man who might have gotten back at him.

Jeannette Andrade

Iloko slams MMDA

MANILA Vice Mayor Isko Moreno slammed the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority should put its house on their work instead of casting the heat on the volunteers. Moreno, the city's acting mayor, was referring to a recent meeting called by MMDA Chair Bayani Fernando with BFP officials and fire volunteers. During the meeting, a memorandum was drafted requiring volunteers to first seek clearance from the BFP before responding to fires. "The MMDA has no authority over fire volunteers," Moreno said. "During most times of fire, volunteers are the first to arrive at the scene of fire and other emergency situations, we should welcome everyone who wants to help, whether it be from the government or private sector," he added. But Sgt. Marivic Lanisa, chief of the BFP Manila public information office, said the proposed memorandum is geared towards improving the coordination and the smooth flow of the volunteer groups. Lanisa said that right now, fire volunteers do not submit their reports or do they disclose their initial findings to arson investigators. "It will help us in tracking down of fire if they submit a report or at least speak with arson investigators. If they arrive at the scene first, they can tell us the color of the fire, the smell so that we will have an idea how it started," he added.

Alison W. Lopez

Benefit concert set

PHOEBE Angelina Cepeda, a nurse and former Miss Cle Los Santos-STI, has been battling non-Hodgkin's lymphoma, a cancer of the blood which spreads through the lymphatic channels to the spleen and bloodstream. She needs to immediately undergo bone marrow transplant after her normal blood cells were destroyed by chemotherapy and radiation. To raise the huge amount needed for her operation, the BLS-STI Batch 2006 led by its president Jeffrey Lamson is putting up a benefit concert by "Pinatee Idol" Lou Strong, One Love. "It will be held on Sept. 11, 12 and 13 at 6 p.m. in Paseo, Tomas Morato, Quezon City. Donations are also accepted at any Bank of Commerce branch account no. 638-20-00008-8 or call Jeffrey Lamson Cepeda at 0928-3868098 or 4211587 for more information.

Moreno hasn't dropped the habit, but will strictly enforce smoking ban

By Allison W. Lopez

MORENO

ALTHOUGH IT COULD BE hard for a smoker like him, Manila Vice Mayor Isko Moreno yesterday promised to enforce a ban on smoking inside City Hall as ordered by Mayor Alfredo Lim.

"As the father of the City Council and acting mayor, I will follow the order. It will start with me," said Moreno, who admitted to smoking nearly a pack of cigarettes every day.

Aside from Moreno, several other members of the City Council also smoke. Some of them have been spotted by reporters puffing at a cigarette outside the session hall during breaks.

Lim said on Monday due to new laws for City Hall to become smoke-free to promote wellness among its employees and visitors.

The ban is currently in Davao for a business meeting and will be back on Sept. 9.

Moreno said he will begin limiting his smoking to certain areas like his secretariat office or the toilet.

He added that he would ask the City Hall security guards and the police to strictly enforce the ban which is backed by a 1991 ordinance banning smoking in public places.

Moreno said Ordinance No. 7748, which prohibits smoking in specific places like public utility vehicles, hospitals, schools and conference rooms where more than two persons congregate, was still valid despite the lack of implementation.

Signed during the term of then Manila Mayor Mel Lopez, the ordinance penalizes violators with a fine of P300 or imprisonment of not more than two days.

"We already created an oversight committee so as to see that all the ordinances are followed. The ordinances on smoking were probably not implemented by previous administrations," said Moreno, who acknowledged that there were other ordinances which were also not being followed.

He, however, clarified that the sale of cigarettes was not banned in City Hall since the ordinance defined smoking as "carrying a lighted cigar, cigarette, or pipe or other smoking paraphernalia, whether or not it is being puffed, smoked or inhaled."

Suspected gunman in QC barangay official's slay faces murder raps

By Margaux C. Ortiz

MURDER CHARGES HAVE been filed in the Quezon City Regional Trial Court against a 32-year-old man accused of shooting to death a Quezon City barangay captain last month.

Assistant City Prosecutor Batlian Ruth Baloran recommended no bail for Jose Peralta's temporary liberty.

The conclusion of the case is the result of continued police operations and positive identification by witnesses that the respondent committed the crime, Baloran said.

Peralta was arrested in a follow-up operation on Aug. 28, 2007 for allegedly shooting Barangay Ground chief Ramon Ilisat while the latter was presiding over a meeting in July.

Court records showed that Peralta suddenly barged in the room and shot the victim in the face and body with a caliber .45 pistol. Peralta then fled on a black motorcycle, while two of his still unidentified accomplices immediately boarded a passenger jeepney.

A police "asset" told investigators during follow-up operations that she overheard the suspect brag in his companions that he shot someone in Barangay Ground the previous week. Another witness told authorities that Peralta was a resident of Barangay Ilisan in Quezon City.

Peralta was finally arrested after a concerned citizen called up the police and said the suspect was seen with a gun tucked in his waist while strolling Ilisan. Police also was positively identified by at least three witnesses.

At the time of his death, Ilisat was among the longest-serving elected public servants of Barangay Central, having served the area for 13 years.

Defective weighing scales seized in 2 Muntinlupa markets

By Julie Pi. Bumlio

OVER 120 DEFECTIVE AND illegal weighing scales were confiscated from two public markets in Muntinlupa City over the weekend.

A total of 83 weighing scales were seized from vendors at the shabang public market while 62 others were confiscated from the Poblacion public market.

Muntinlupa Mayor Aldrin San Pedro ordered the crackdown, dubbed "Operation Timbangan," to shield consumers from unscrupulous vendors in the city's public markets.

"This is to protect consumers against vendors who take advantage of their customers just to earn more," San Pedro said.

The seized weighing scales either had no official seals or were found to have been tampered with, a violation of Municipal Ordinance 93-15, he added.

Meanwhile, the Muntinlupa City public market has posted a 60 percent increase in its monthly collection from rentals since July.

Dorotea Martin, market administrator, said that from P2.1 million a month, they now collect P3.3 million from their 1,447 stall holders. The public market is wholly managed and operated by the city government.

San Pedro lauded the increase in the public market's monthly revenues, adding that the additional income would be used in fund city projects.

"The new management of the public market has stepped up its efforts to increase the daily collection. We are also identifying other potential sources of revenues for the city government," the mayor said.

Among the new policies implemented at the market was the installation of electric submeters in each stall to prevent the theft of electricity among vendors who would install additional appliances without informing market officials.

METRO

Citizen's Call

One tip of difference and modifications to make up or worries.
Your stories. Tell us all about it.

- Did a signage make your day?
- Outstanding transport on your favorite commuter line?
- Been slapped forever on the street where you live?
- Are you up to arrest against the government or its economic forces?
- Bored by a state-known barangay project with a big question mark in your community?
- Has there no policeman?
- Fed up with roaring and blasting neighbors?
- In short an emerging non-home in your neighborhood?
- Straightforward tools on your way to work?

TEXT TEXT [illegible]

0918-8988566

P.S. [illegible]

INQUIRER

Arraignment of Boratong, three others in murder case deferred

By Kristine L. Rizon

A PASIG CITY COURT JUDGE YESTERday deferred the arraignment of three men facing murder and homicide charges in connection with the killing of a television broadcaster in 2005.

Judge Nicanor Mendiola Jr. of Pasig City Regional Trial Court Branch 161 cancelled the arraignment pending the resolution of a defense motion for him to recuse himself from the case despite the public prosecutor's motion to withdraw the motion to recuse.

Boratong and his wife, Merida, along with former policeman Raoul Alonzo and Homer Lubag, have been linked to the death of Gerardo Colmo, a television network information, in November 2005.

The Boratong couple were also charged with evading and operating a drug den in Pasig City that the police raided and demolished last year. Amin has been detained at the National Bureau of Investigation while Merida's whereabouts are unknown.

Mercado did not set the date for the arraignment. He also gave the Eastern Police District and the other parties 10 days to comment on the defense's motion to move the arraignment and recall the warrants of arrest issued against the accused.

Doctor who brought Cris . . .

From page A-14

Police investigators did not identify the fraternity members who said they were at least nine people, including Mendez, who were present during the rites which were held in Barangay Pinang, Tarlac, Tingkian.

Chief Insp. Lino Bayang of the Quezon City Police District Criminal Investigation and Detection Unit said that although the information provided by the witness was useful, they still had to verify and corroborate it against the evidence they had already uncovered.

The family of Mendez, meanwhile, suffered one more setback in his death in cause forward and lose the consequences of their action, lawyer Ex-presentus Baldeo said.

"Have pity on Cris' family. Come out and reveal the truth," Baldeo said in a phone interview from Timog, Quezon, the victim's hometown where he was buried.

DID YOU KNOW

SYRACUS writer Miguel Malvar, after whom a street in Malate was named, was born on Sept. 3, 1804 in Madrid, Spain. He was a staunch advocate of the Propaganda Movement and was a founder of the Asociacion Hispano-Filipina.

The historian Teodoro Agoncillo once renamed Nicanor Reyes Street, after the founder of Far Eastern University.

Cyril L. Bonalanta
Inquirer Research

C. America braces for strong hurricane

TEGUCIGALPA—TENS OF thousands of people hunkered in storm shelters on Tuesday as Hurricane Felix roared toward Central America, but transport shortages left many facing the storm's whipping winds and rain in their homes.

The highly dangerous Category 4 hurricane, due to make landfall around mid-morning, was strengthening as it charged toward Honduras and Nicaragua with top sustained winds near 240 kph, providing fears of a repeat of Hurricane Mitch, which killed some 10,000 people in central America in 1998.

"There could be serious damage and material loss, but human losses, if people do not take precautionary measures," Honduran President Manuel Zelaya warned.

Up to 40,000 Hondurans were evacuated to shelters, but some 15,000 people were unable to find transportation and were forced to ride out the storm in their homes.

"They couldn't be evacuated because there is no fuel to take them to safe areas," said Carolina Echeverria, a deputy from Colon Gracias a Dios on the border with Nicaragua, where Felix was headed.

Hundreds of tourists were flown to the Honduran mainland from beach and diving resorts on the Bay Islands, and police reported long lines at airport hotels and gas stations in coastal cities as residents stocked up on food, water and fuel.

A storm surge of up to 3.1 m was expected.

Emergency workers aided thousands of Miskito Indians on of sparsely populated, coastal areas near the border, dotted with lagoons and crocodile-infested rivers. The trade-fishing Miskito farmed a lavish prosecution inside the 19th century.

Some 35,000 live in Honduras, and over 100,000 in Nicaragua.

Felix, the second hurricane of the 2007 Atlantic season, had been a top-ranked Category 5, dozen Mic Hurricane Dean, which killed 22 people in the Caribbean and Mexico in August.

As of 2 a.m. EDT, the US National Hurricane center said Felix was 165 km east-southeast of Cabo Gracias a Dios and expected to make landfall within the next few hours. Reuters

Panama begins $5.25-B canal expansion project

A CONTROLLED explosion marks the beginning of the expansion of the Panama Canal project in Paraiso on the outskirts of Panama City on Monday, Sept. 3.

PANAMA CITY—CONSTRUCtion got underway on Monday on a $5.25-billion project to improve and expand the Panama Canal, considered one of the world's engineering marvels.

The project will double the capacity of the 80-kilometre canal, built 1904-1914 by the United States, which ordered—pushed control of the waterway to Panama on December 1999.

Panamanian President Martin Torrijos on Monday hosted former US president Jimmy Carter at a ceremony marking the start of the expansion, which is expected to take 10 years to complete.

Also attending the ceremony were Jose Miguel Insulza, Secretary General of the Organization of American States, Salvadoran President Elias Antonio Saca and Nicaraguan President Daniel Ortega.

The project, which will build a third set of locks on the Atlantic and Pacific sides of the waterway, will ensure that today's supersize container ships, cruise liners and oil tankers—many of which are too wide for the canal—will be able to navigate the waterway to the locals.

The largest ships that now use the canal carry as many as 5,000 containers, but future supercarriers and ships carrying as many as 12,000 containers can use the canal.

Monday's ceremony falls on the 30th anniversary of the 1997 signing of an agreement between then-US President Carter and Panamanian leader Omar Torrijos—the current president's father—that put the canal under Panamanian control.

Schools and government offices were closed on Monday as Torrijos has urged Panamanians to participate in the public events marking the day.

Some 30,000 people attended according to officials and local media, despite organized worry weather as Caribbean Hurricane Felix headed for the region.

Some 14,000 ships, comprising about five percent of annual world commerce, pass through the Central American shortcut between the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans—avoiding the arduous and costly journey around South America.

Some 80 percent of Panama's economy is linked to canal activity, amounting to some $650 billion, or 80 percent of Panama's gross domestic product.

The waterway's main users are the United States, China and Japan.

The third set of locks, parallel to the existing two, would accommodate massive vessels like tankers in length, 49 meters wide and with a 15 meter draft.

Today, the so-called post-Panamax ships—too wide and too long for the Panama Canal—must circle Cape Horn at the southern tip of South America to pass between the Atlantic and the Pacific Oceans.

The government says work would be financed by a hike in tolls, worth $3.3 billion in 2005.

Panamanian authorities say the project will directly generate 7,000 jobs, and indirectly 35,000. AFP

N. Korea expects out of terror list

SEOUL—SOUTH KOREA SAID on Monday the United States had agreed to remove it from its list of countries that support terrorism, a move Pyongyang has long sought to receive international aid and hopefully end its status as a global pariah.

The chief US negotiator has hinted that Washington could remove North Korea from the list of state sponsors of terrorism before it completely gives up its nuclear arms programs.

But the government now has said it has decided to strike Pyongyang from the list, which currently also includes Cuba, Iran, Sudan and Syria.

North Korea said it agreed to talks at the weekend in Geneva with the United States to take the next step in efforts to remove its the existing nuclear facilities in the DPRK (North Korea) within this year," its KCNA news agency quoted a Foreign Ministry spokesperson as saying.

"In return for this, the US decided to take such political and economic measures for compensations as delisting the DPRK as a terrorism sponsor and lifting all sanctions that have been applied according to the Trading with the Enemy Act." The unnamed spokesperson was cited as saying. Reuters

WorldBriefs

Pakistan blasts kill 24

PARACHINAR—Suspected suicide bombings hit the fragile ties carrying Pakistan defence secretary on Tuesday in the garrison city of Rawalpindi and a market crowded with holiday-24 people, officials said. "Both appear to be suicide attacks," chief military spokesperson Maj. Gen. Waheed Arshad told AFP. He said that 24 people were killed in the two blasts and that 60 were wounded. The first bombing took apart a fruit-loaded vehicle in the Parachinar market, burning 30 of them dead and more than dozen wounded, government interior secretary Kamal Shah said. The second blast happened about 3 kilometres away in the city's crowded R.A. bazaar, killing at least eight people, Shah said. AFP

Pension scandal hits Japan

TOKYO—Japanese pension officials have overlooked more than 200 million yen ($2.15 million) from the government since 1960, according to new reports, a finding that could further damage public faith in the country's pension system. The Social Insurance Agency, which oversees Japan's pension systems, issued the reports on Monday following a government request amid a widening pension scandal. The agency probe turns after the government announced Friday that it had lost track of pension records linked to 64 million clients. The pension fiasco has led to further distrust in a government already tainted by a series of scandals. The government has pledged to do all it can and set up 24-hour call centers to check records. AP

Strikes paralyzes London

LONDON—Most of London's sprawling subway network was shut down by a strike on Tuesday, leaving hundreds of thousands of workers to walk, switch to buses, or just stay home. Around 2,300 members of the Rail Maritime and Transport Workers launched a 72-hour strike at 6 p.m. Monday in a dispute related to the collapse of their employer, maintenance contractor Metronet. There was no service on nine of the network's 12 lines, subway operator Transport for London said. AP

Binladin company denies links to Osama

NEW YORK—LAWYERS FOR the Saudi Binladin Group, responding to lawsuits filed over the 9/11 attacks, say the huge engineering and construction company is not liable for the terrorist plot because it forced Osama bin Laden to surrender his stake in the company 14 years ago.

In court papers, the lawyers argued that the Saudi Binladin Group, founded in 1969, forced the terrorist mastermind out as a shareholder of the company and another family-owned company, the Mohammad Binladin Co., in June 1993.

The documents were filed Friday evening in US District Court in Manhattan in response to claims in lawsuits brought by representatives, survivors and insurance carriers of the victims of the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks in New York, Washington and Pennsylvania.

Lawyers for the plaintiffs contend that the Saudi Binladin Group, along with numerous banks, charities and individuals worldwide, provided material support and assistance to al-Qaida prior to the attacks. The lawsuits seek billions of dollars in damages.

The court documents identify the Saudi Binladin Group as the bin Laden's brother, the senior members of the bin Laden family and chair of Saudi Binladin Group—as one of al-Qaida's principal financiers.

A judge in July had ordered Saudi Binladin Group to provide additional information about when the money for Osama bin Laden's 2 percent stake in the company went.

The plaintiffs, in court papers filed in August, complained the order fell short. It required the company to produce records of changes in the assets of a 1993 trust created from the sale of Osama bin Laden's shares—but only if they document transfers to him," it said.

"There are a total others shared by investor financiers due to their ability to hide true ownership of trust assets, conceal the identity of parties benefiting from the trust and evade the reach of financial details," the plaintiffs said.

In its Friday filing, lawyers for Saudi Binladin Group said Bakr Binladin publicly renounced Osama bin Laden in a statement released to the media in February 1994. Two months later, the bin Laden family disowned Osama bin Laden's citizenship and froze his assets, the lawyers noted.

These actions, they said, occurred well before the United States first placed Osama bin Laden on a list of designated foreign terrorist individuals and organizations on Aug. 20, 1998, the same year the leader of al-Qaida issued an edict that it was the duty of Muslims to attack US citizens.

Osama bin Laden has more than 50 siblings who share in the fortune amassed after Osama's father, Mohammed Binladin, built his construction empire, elevating his family to among the wealthiest in Saudi Arabia. The al-Qaida founder's financial wealth has remained unclear.

According to the court papers, Saudi Binladin Group was created as the surviving entity of Ms. Invested Binladin's construction company, which was formed in the 1930s. AP

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All the well-wishing patriotic citizens of our country are invited to participate in building a Tower of Invincibility in our capital city, Quezon City, as the pride of the nation, and to perpetuate their name by building the most invincible national symbol eternal of all times.

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The WORLD

Editor Lawrence B. Ibañez

Taliban beat them for refusing to convert, say ex-hostages

SEOUL—SOME OF THE SOUTH Korean Christian aid workers held hostage by Afghanistan's Taliban said they were beaten for refusing to convert to Islam and pressuring female captives, a hospital chief said on Monday.

"We found through medical checks that some male hostages were beaten," Cho Seung-Geun told reporters after the 19 freed aid workers—14 women and five men—underwent examinations at a hospital outside Seoul.

They had returned home Sunday after six weeks in captivity.

"They said they were beaten at first for refusing to take part in Islamic prayers or for rejecting a demand to convert," Cho said.

The disclosure was likely to increase public sympathy for the six hostages, mostly in their 20s and 30s, following increasing criticism of what was seen as a reckless trip to a war-torn, devoutly Islamic nation.

President Roh Moo-Hyun on Monday ordered that the former captives report some of the stain of their ordeal, which followed a deal between South Korean government negotiators in Afghanistan and the hardline Islamic militants.

The hospital chief said two male hostages, Ju Chang-Hee and Sung Hyung-Min, were beaten or threatened with death when they refused to leave out of a dispute shelter and leave some of their female colleagues behind.

But Cho said medical checks on the women showed no signs of rape, and they did not report having been sexually assaulted.

She said workers repeatedly apologized after entering house early Sunday. They were taken to Ilsan Jesaeng General Hospital south of the capital for check-ups.

Cho said the men had fully recovered and no longer showed external signs of their hostage. He did not say how many of the hostages had been assaulted.

A pastor from the Saem-Mul Presbyterian church which organized the ill-fated mission said Monday that some male hostages had been "severely beaten" for refusing to embrace Islam.

The pastor, Bak Eun-Jo, also said some of the women had been "at risk of being sexually assaulted." "The men six or seven female hostages showed symptoms of hysteria and depression, and expressed worries about their lives after being released from the hospital.

"Some patients require a close look and intensive care and treatment," he said, adding they are still suffering from shock after learning upon their release that two male hostages were murdered in July. AFP

KIM Gi-Hak (right) and Ban Hyung-Ju (left), who were among the 23 Koreans kidnapped and freed later by the Taliban in Afghanistan, speak at a news conference at the Sae-Anyang Hospital in Anyang, southwest of Seoul on Sept. 4. —

Bush hints at US troop cuts in Iraq

AL-ASAD AIR BASE, IRAQ—President George W. Bush, on a surprise visit to Iraq on Monday, said a reduction in combat troops was possible but cautioned against "normal" US politicians ahead of a showdown with Congress.

Bush flew from Washington in total secrecy on this desert base in Anbar province, where the US administration has taken heart from the sight of former Sunni insurgents joining with US forces in fight al-Qaida terrorists.

He convened a meeting of his "war council" with Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki and other Iraqi leaders just days before US commander Gen. David Petraeus and US ambassador Ryan Crocker report to Congress on the progress of Bush's military "surge" strategy.

Petraeus and Crocker believed that "if the kind of success we are now seeing (in Anbar) continues, it is possible to maintain the same level of security with fewer forces from forces," Bush said.

"I urge members of Congress to listen to what (Petraeus and Crocker) have to say," he said, standing in front of two military Humvees upside in the gathering night.

The White House is to make a formal report to the Democratic-led Congress by Sept. 15 aimed at persuading US lawmakers to continue funding the Iraq war, four and a half bloody years since the US-led invasion of 2003.

Aside from Bush himself, Maliki is coming under harsh criticism from many in Congress for his perceived political inaction to reconcile Iraq's warring factions.

Bush aboard Air Force One en route to a summit of Asia-Pacific leaders in Australia, Bush criticized Democrats with the slogan of political change in Iraq but said he still backed Maliki's "evolving" leadership.

Bush's trip to Iraq coincided with the withdrawal of British troops from their last base in the southern city of Basra amid tensions between Washington and its top ally Britain over their policy in Iraq.

Shaping a surprise detour from his trip to Sydney, Bush arrived at the Al-Asad air base in Anbar along with Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice and national security adviser Stephen Hadley. AFP

CITYLIGHTS GARDENS - TOWERS 3 & 4 GETS FINANCIAL BACKING OF DBP

The Development Bank of the Philippines (DBP), the second largest government-owned bank in the Philippines, has put its financial muscle behind Syntech Properties Inc (Syntech) in support of Syntech's construction of Towers 3 and 4 of the Citylights Gardens Condominium project in Cebu City. At the project financing loan signing ceremony held today at the Marco Polo Plaza Hotel, the two parties inked a deal that confirms DBP's provision of a Peso 300-million term loan facility to partially finance the construction of the project. Syntech is part of the Wah Hup Group, a leading Singapore-based building and civil engineering contractor. Through Syntech, it has heavily invested in the development of the entire project which entails a total of over Peso 2,000 million. The management is now very pleased to note that a local government-backed bank is helping to promote such foreign investments in the country by actively participating in the project.

At the event, Syntech is represented by its Chairman, Mr Eugene Yong Boh Yoon, whereas Mr. Rosalio Dagooten, Senior Assistant Vice President and Head of SRMO-CPD, represented DBP in the signing of the loan agreement. Mr Raimundo Ochoco III, also present at the occasion, DBP's Board of Directors. The event is witnessed by senior officials from Syntech and DBP.

Syntech is already mid-way through the construction of Towers 3 & 4 of Citylights Gardens Condominium project. Tower 3 is being topped off on the same day and construction of Tower 4 is on schedule to follow by early next year. The two 28-storey towers will comprise the second and final phase of the entire project. Each tower offers 108 units of 2 and 3-bedroomed well-appointed apartments for the discerning few. Some of the units range from 100 to 160 square meters. With a choice location up on the Nivel Hills, sunny and enjoys spectacular views of the surrounding city area and mountains. Residents of this exclusive condominium project will get to enjoy the first class amenities and recreational facilities which are already in place.

THE HEAD of The Missionaries of Charity Sister Mirmala gestures as she speaks with AFP during an interview at Mother House, the global headquarters of the order in Calcutta. —

Mother Teresa's letters surprising, inspiring

CALCUTTA, INDIA—LETTERS written by Mother Teresa which reveal she sometimes doubted God inspired and then inspired many among her order, her successor said ahead of Wednesday's 10th anniversary of the order's Albanian nun's death.

"The letters were surprised. I was surprised to learn how the suffered in her desire for God," said Sister Nirmala, the Missionaries superior general of the 4,000-member order.

"She suffered, yet she had a mask or herself of repentance yet which center only Jesus complete surrender to God."

Sister Nirmala succeeded an ailing Mother Teresa six months before she died aged 87 on Sept. 5, 1997, and will help lead a special Mass to mark her passing.

The collection of letters written to colleagues and superiors over 66 years and compiled by an adviser for her sainthood are due to be published on Tuesday under the title "Mother Teresa: Come Be My Light."

They were a range of subjects dear to the Roman Catholic nun but it is those which portray her as at times deeply tormented about her faith that have grabbed attention.

In 1950, the 1979 Nobel Peace Prize winner, who dedicated her life to the poor, sick and dying in India, wrote: "Such deep longing for God—and ... repulsed—emptiness—no faith—no love—no zeal." Reuters

Al Fayed blasts bishop's plea for Diana's peace

LONDON—MOHAMED Al Fayed has lashed out at a prominent bishop's plea for the wrongdoing over Diana, princess of Wales' memory to stem, a newspaper reported on Sunday.

Al Fayed, the father of Diana's boyfriend Dodi Fayed, who was also killed by a tragic 1997 car crash in Paris, took a swipe at Richard Chartres, the bishop of London.

The bigwigs (prose branded Chartres a "muffled shite" in an indication that next month's inquest—which Al Fayed is heavily involved in—will be a bitter affair). The Sunday Times reported.

"Let it rain here," Chartres urged the congregation at St. Paul's memorial service for Diana...so which Al Fayed was annoyed...which started 10 years since the fatal crash which took her life at the age of 36.

Her sons Princes William, now 25, and Harry 22, both spoke, with the younger royal delivering a touching speech about his mother.

"Prince Harry had the grace to acknowledge the suffering of other families who lost loved ones that night," Al Fayed said in a statement.

"The muffled shite of a clergyman should take lessons from the 22 year-old prince in how to behave. He certainly shouldn't have hijacked a memorial service dedicated to Diana, princess of Wales, to let us know notions of his personal opinions—for that's all they were. AFP

AL FAYED

WHAT'S INSIDE

■ Roger serves up another victory /A26

SPORTS

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ONE of the NBA's most endearing stars, Kobe Bryant of the LA. Lakers, warms up fans on the arrival at the NAIA last night. JOAN BONDOC

Lakers' Kobe planes in amid tight security

By Tarra Quismundo

AMERICAN BASKETBALL superstar Kobe Bryant flew into the country via a private jet last night amid protocols said to be more restrictive than those enforced during visits of heads of state, diplomats and other dignitaries.

Only a select group of photographers and television crew were allowed to cover the arrival of Bryant's party which arrived at past 6 p.m. at the ramp near the International Cargo Terminal of the Ninoy Aquino International Airport.

Organizers of Bryant's Manila visit allowed handpicked photographers of selected major broadsheets, the Inquirer included, to cover the National Basketball Association superstar's arrival for a one-day stop here as part of a promotional Asian tour for the sports brand Nike.

However, strictly no interviews were allowed.

Media coordinators with held flights details for airport sources said Bryant arrived via a light jet, an 8- to 10-seater Gulf Stream, from Honolulu, Hawaii. The LA. Lakers' star reportedly shared the plane with five other passengers.

Bryant's Manila stop is part of his Supercharged Asia Tour 2007, which launches a Nike basketball footwear named after him, organizers said.

He is expected to mingle with children from a Philippanga elementary school at the Fort at 2 p.m. and then "share his training regimen" with young Filipino basketball players at the Philippine Arena in Ilasig City later in the afternoon.

Bryant will then continue his tour in Taipei, Hong Kong, Shanghai and Beijing.

The 6-foot-6 star is coming off the Fiba Asia championships, where he was part of the Team USA that bagged the gold medal.

Bryant is also expected to spearhead the American bid to regain lost glory in basketball, a sport where the US used to enjoy dominant status.

But losses in two World Championship tournaments and the 2004 Olympics have knocked the Americans off the throne, although Bryant and Co. are heavily favored again for Beijing 2008.

This is the second time Bryant will be flying to the Philippines, although he was still just a budding superstar during his first visit here.

'I want to beat Manny so badly I can taste it'

Barrera carries weight of fallen Mexican fighters

MANNY PACQUIAO HAS ALWAYS FOUGHT to behalf of his country—anyone who has heard his previous pre- and post-fight talk knows that much.

When he faces Mexican titleist Antonio Barrera on Oct. 6, though, he won't be the only one trying to summon nationalistic fervor.

Barrera, the Latino boxing idol headed for Hall of Fame-enshrining, has entered the highly anticipated rematch into spanish battle.

"I am not just fighting for personal revenge. I'm fighting for my country and my fellow Mexican fighters who have fallen victim to Pacquiao," said Barrera after a workout, according to a report at cnnsi.sk.boxing.com.

"I am coming harder than I ever have. I want to beat Manny so badly I can taste it. This goes beyond being personal. For me, this fight is about restoring national pride."

And as if there isn't enough nationalistic flavor surrounding the much-hyped rematch, a report by the boxing website on the Barrera training in Guadalajara, Mexico declared the Filipino ring icon as "Republica Country No. 1."

"Pacquiao has blitzed through the best boxing fighters Mexico had to offer since 2000, including Morales (KO 3, TKO 11), Barrera (TKO 11), Oscar Larios (TKO 11), Erik Morales (TKO 11), Hector 'Macho' Acero Sanchez (TKO 6) and Jorge Solis (KO 8)," the report said.

"The only 'Mexican' was a draw against Juan Manuel Marquez in 2004, where Pacquiao sent Marquez to the canvas three times in the first round."

Pacquiao, for his part, continues to train at the Baguio "Wildcat" Sahod gym in Cebu City, and has vowed not to allow Barrera exact revenge for his humiliating loss in Texas in November 2003.

The spot has been closed to the public after trainer Freddie Roach transplanted a gun owner (since of unknown individuals secretly taking footages of Pacquiao).

Even the media have not been spared. They have been asked to remain on entry pass at Sahod's office to be approved by coach.

On Saturday, Pacquiao will hold a media

BARRERA: This fight is beyond personal

workout at the Wild Card gym in Los Angeles, California, where he will get a feel for the style of native 40 pupils of the Pico and Louis Advisor Learning Center to cut him train.

Ashley L. Lagniton Jr., Correspondent

Cone sees no problem signing Bono, Quiñahan

By Hussyn S. Cuerlo

ONE THREE-TIME ROOKIE HONOREE resigned as of yesterday and two of them belong to the Alaska Aces.

He don't take that as an indication of how the Aces coaching staff think of Ben Bono and Jil Quiñahan.

"We actually treat them as picks higher than where we got them," coach coach Tim Cone told the Inquirer yesterday. "I don't foresee any problems as far as negotiations (for their contracts) go.

"I'm sure that we (management) will give them what they expect."

A third first rookie, Yousif Aljamal, was drafted by ta23 and dealt to Talk 'N Text, but not having a contract at this point is understandable for the 6-foot-4 do-it-all.

Aljamal is still spearheading his decision with the national bid to the NCAA and coach Pandan Lim, who happens to be the Phoenix Fuel manager, said that Aljamal will be signed right after the NCAA.

Training camp starts today for Alaska, but one full day after coming back from a long vacation in California as part of the team's bonus for winning the Fiesta Cup over Talk 'N Text, and Cone said that the absence of key contracts won't keep Bono and Quiñahan from hitting the gym with the team.

"I am not forcing them. Bono and Quiñahan is signed practice," Cone added. "But I would be very happy if they show up for practice."

Team manager Joaquí Trillo is still in the United States to attend to some things, but Cone said that contract negotiations will start as soon as Trillo arrives tomorrow.

Alaska picked Bono, a former UAAP MVP out of Adamson, sixth in the draft before plucking Quiñahan, a lowly rower, with the seventh overall choice.

Bono, in an earlier long-one report, will be asking for a three-year deal worth not over P1 million, was last considering that No. 1 pick Jay Dreamer will get P8,344 million over the same period from Petron.

"I consider them steals in the draft," Cone added. "I was surprised that we got to them with each late picks."

Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas
Committee on Disposal of Real Properties

INVITATION TO BID

The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas invites all interested parties to bid for the following real estate properties:

Location	TCT No.	Lot Area (sq.m.)	Description	Minimum Bid Price
1 Unknown Evergreen Executive Village	31-126 11-982	125 to 200 sq.m. 125 to 200 sq.m.	Residential lots Residential lots w/ 30 sq.m. bldg.	P300/sq.m.-P350/sq.m. P350/sq.m.-P400/sq.m.
2 Mandaluyong City Townsite Sales Commission	2-1446 2-1445	90 to 92 sq.m. 120 sq.m.	Residential Condo units Parking lot	P1,500/sq.m.-P2,000/sq.m. P500/sq.m.
3 Mandaluyong City Addition Hills Subdivision a. B.M. Street Lot 4, Block 2	24965	301	Commercial w/ 450 sq.m. bldg.	P1,750,000
4 Antipolo Cubao-Antipolo Subdivision	11-04 11-05	90 to 120 sq.m. 90 to 120 sq.m.	Residential lots Residential lots w/ 30 sq.m. bldg.	P300/sq.m.-P350/sq.m. P350/sq.m.-P400/sq.m.
5 Batangas Brgy. Wawa-Lemery, Batangas	T-14928	31,000	Agricultural lot	P200,000
6 Metro Alaminos Townsite Sales Division, Phase 2 a. b.	11-04 11-05	70 to 200 sq.m. 150 to 200 sq.m.	Residential lots Residential lots w/ 30 sq.m. bldg.	P1,500/sq.m.-P2,000/sq.m. P2,000/sq.m.-P2,500/sq.m.
7 Tanza Marketing City Subdivision a. Block 1, Lot 10, Phase 1 b. Block 19, Lot 10, Phase 1 c. Phase 1 d. Phase 1 e. Phase 1 f. Phase 1 g. Phase 1 h. Phase 1	48774 48804 [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]	2,000 2,000 [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]	Commercial lot Commercial lot Residential lot w/ 30 sq.m. bldg. Residential lot w/ 30 sq.m. bldg. Residential lot w/ 30 sq.m. bldg. Residential lot w/ 30 sq.m. bldg. Residential lot w/ 30 sq.m. bldg. Residential lot w/ 30 sq.m. bldg.	P1,000,000 P1,000,000 P300/sq.m.-P350/sq.m. P300/sq.m.-P350/sq.m. P300/sq.m.-P350/sq.m. P300/sq.m.-P350/sq.m. P300/sq.m.-P350/sq.m. P300/sq.m.-P350/sq.m.

Deadline for submission of duly accomplished bid forms enclosed in sealed envelopes shall be on 12 September 2007, 10:00 A.M. at No. 101 Tina Roxas Bldg., BSP Complex, A. Mabini St., Malate, Manila. All bids will be opened immediately after the deadline in the presence of bidders or their duly authorized representatives. Executive Meeting Center, Tina Roxas Bldg., BSP Complex.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

1. The Buyer is required to have registered the property, maintained its condition and verified the title thereof.
2. The date of the prospective deadline, the in "Historical" and the winning bidder shall undertake the responsibility to acquire the property "As Is, Where Is" basis and the payment of the property shall be made within [illegible] days.
3. The BSP reserves the right to advertise any or all the properties offered for sale at any time and to reject any or all bids or to waive any informality found therein, or to accept such offers as will be considered advantageous to the BSP.
4. Prices are subject to change without prior notice.
5. The Committee will not entertain any conditional offers for negotiation, or the submission of [illegible], and will confine its action to the consideration of bids submitted in accordance with the terms and conditions herein set forth. Any attempt to accept offers through the Head Management Department, Treasurer, the Governor's office or the Committee will exclude the prospective bidder/offeror after failure of bidding whenever there is a higher/competitive offer received.
6. Offerors or the Called Bidding must tender a BID BOND equivalent to 10% of the offered price and offerors under the negotiated sale basis must submit an EARNEST MONEY equivalent to 10% of the negotiated price either in CASH or CASHIER'S/MANAGER'S CHECK payable to the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas which shall form part of the consideration once the offer is approved.
7. The sale shall be subject to other terms and conditions stated in the bidding documents.

Complete description of the properties, sale and negotiations or the bidding procedures and the prescribed bid forms are available for a minimum fee of P150.00 at the Assets Management Department I, Rm. 101, Tina Roxas Bldg., through the following:

	Direct Line	Trunkline 224-70-13 Loc. 2307
Ms. Geraldine Tumangan / Adel Villanueva Jane Rosales	524-44-88	
Ms. Rosalinda Rosales-Sagsoo Marvin Rodriguez	524-44-29	2301

(Sgd.) **MELITA A. GONZAGA**
Committee Chairman

BSP-Adv-09-2007

SEAG squad 'won't miss Pagulayan'

PAGULAYAN

By Musong R. Castillo

"SEAG WILL CONTINUE TO LOOK BRIGHT for the Philippines billiards team in the coming Southeast Asian Games...never mind if the squad will miss one of its most colorful and talented mainstays.

Alex Pagulayan, the former world 9-ball champion and member of the JCP team that won a mind-boggling eight gold medals in the 2005 Manila SEAG, has opted out this year in view of differences with the governing billiards and Snooker Congress of the Philippines.

"We've never gone into the habit of predicting the number of golds...but definitely it is to the good course where we have a big chance," said SEAT chair Efrim Bajarin, who greeted yesterday in the weekly PSA forum in Shakey's EDSA Balintawak.

Bajarin, who was joined in the Forum by BSCP chair Ian Mallabanan, confirmed that Pagulayan will skip the SEAG but will play for the country in the 2007 World Pool Championship later this year.

Pagulayan's absence, Bajarin said, is not enough to diminish the potential gold haul for the country in December.

Pagulayan, who had a spat with the SEAT after he was pulled out of a leg of the Gretimco 9-Ball Tour, won three of those SEAG gold medals two years ago, and would definitely be a draw for the country in the Thailand Games.

He won the 9-ball singles gold medal, was 'left' of the 9-ball doubles champion and a member of the championship snooker team.

His absence will leave the country's chances squarely on the shoulders of Asian Games 9-Ball gold medal winner Antonio Gabica and promising world superstar Jeffrey De Luna.

Already assured of slots in the snooker team are Jungie Caneman, Reynaldo Grandea, Francisco della Cruz, Al Ortega, Jason Alba and former Asian champion Marlon Manalo.

"Marlon expressed interest to play," said Bajarin the forum hosted by Shakey's and Pepsi.

PSC getting ₱50 million extra cash from Pagcor

By June Navarro

RAMIREZ

THE CASH-strapped Philippine Sports Commission will get additional funding with the implementation of Executive Order 83, a presidential directive tasked to strengthen the grassroots programs of the sports governing agency.

PSC chair William "Butch" Ramirez said the 50-million budget increase under EO 83 would directly go to the PSC, allowing its funding woes.

According to Ramirez, President Macapagal-Arroyo has already instructed the Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corp. (Pagcor) to set aside P50 million starting October.

The cash is supposed to ease the pressure on the PSC which was allowed a measly P220-million budget for 2007 from the General Appropriations Act. The funding from the GAA is reasonably used for the operations of the agency.

The presidential directive will focus on upgrading facilities, hosting tasks, tournaments, billiards and snooker, but the PSC chief stressed that other disciplines would also be considered, particularly Olympic events.

Ramirez said the discovery of young athletes is one the greatest hurdles that the PSC would like to overcome. PESCOD 1, which would complement the Philippine Olympic Festival (POF), a talent identification scheme of the Philippine Olympic Committee (POC).

With the agency's Philippine Sports Institute as lead organization, Ramirez said the PSC would dispatch coaches to the provinces in the entire archipelago, especially in areas left untrampled by the national sports associations (NSAs).

The perennial disservice would be seen in school and inter-barangay camp supervised by the PSC, Ramirez said.

In-form Cards hope to ride NC momentum

By Marc Anthony Reyes

WHO WOULD HAVE THOUGHT?

Mapua, the team that looked as if it would go down for the count, is up in the Final Four. Yes, the Final Four that's even made Lee Isaac was surprised.

"I must admit that I wasn't expecting to make it to the Final Four right away, considering that we only started our preparations mid-February," he said.

Isaac said his concern on board for a three-year program with reigning Ned Pumaul, Jessie Co and Rolvin dela Peña as the key holdovers. He inherited a team lacking in height but rich in experience.

"I was the only one new to the team," said Isaac, who joins with the Cardinals in the 1984 championship squad and was voted to the MVP plum that year.

The Cardinals, who in the pre-season is pinned 3 losses in Lim with Isaac as the helm, also didn't get the best start of the season losing three straight before clinching win their first win, an 88-86 decision over Jose Rizal last July 6.

At 2-6 through at the height of the second round, Mapua recalled a 4-cage of wins by downing Letran 109-102 last Aug. 5. That upset win triggered the season's hottest finish—a four-game mini that propelled them to the next round.

It was the second straight Final Four appearances for the Cardinals, who last were the Intercollegiate champs back in 1998 and 1999 when the likes of Kenny Cheng and Randy Alcantara formed the backbone of the squad.

But amid the streak, the fanned sounds and the soaring confidence comes this reality check: Mapua will take on second-seeded Letran. Both finished the Final Four with the Final Lions overcoming the twice-as-loss interview.

"We will just give it our best," said Isaac. It will take the best that the Cardinals can give to forge an upset. Because the Lions have proved to be a tough act to crack for Mapua.

Ian Bedia struck a decisive note in the elimination round, beating Mapua, 89-75, last July 27 and 87-77 last July 4 with Ian Olivera blown by a one-game suspension.

And it looks like the Cardinals will try to rile momentum in hopes of pulling off an upset.

"The boys' morale is high because of our four-game winning run at the end of the elimination," said Isaac.

JONATHAN Bansil (left) typifies the Cardinals' spunk late in the eliminations. A win over the Lyceo Knights touched off Mapua's romp.

New PBL team eyes standout collegiate trio

BORBORAN

By Jasmine W. Payo

A YOUTHFUL Titans whipped into form by a young coach.

This is the kind of squad Pharex Health Corp. expects to form in its debut in the Philippine Basketball League (PBL) next season.

Carlo Tan, a 33-year-old former coach of former high school, was tapped to mentor Pharex just days after the league was unanimously approved to enter.

"It's new, exciting as, have experience," said Tan during yesterday's PBA Forum at Shakey's UN Avenue. "We're not thinking of winning right away, we're thinking of building a team. Gradually, the experience is important for us."

Tan said Mark Borboran of University of the East, Mac Baraquel of Far Eastern University and Jonathan Fernandez of National University are among the players to be with Tan.

"I like the game of Borboran, I love the way he can run; it up inside and outside," said Tan, describing the pebble sparse program sponsored by Pagcor and Shakey's UN Avenue.

"Baraquel, he's showing a lot of promise. He's a big, strong and athletic guy. Fernandez, the guy can shoot."

Pharex players complete its lineup after the PBL completed and under deals are in two weeks. The new season will unfold in October.

"We have to make sure we also secure a good center who can play both offensively and defensively," said Tan, who played high school basketball in Canada.

"We're really trying to have a quality competitive team," added team manager Joan Alcantara, a former Miss Blue Eagles standout.

Team officials said that Pharex, a subsidiary of pharmaceutical firm Pharex Laboratories, has a five-year basketball program.

"If we get good picks, probably in our second year you can be very competitive," said Pharex Laboratories division manager Dan Cantos. "But if we have luck in the draft...we can be a contender."

Pharex joins three-time conference champion Talk'n Text, Toyota Balintawak, Magnolia of Ben Hogan Co., Red Bull and Hapee Toothpaste as the league's regular members.

LA cops called into Pacquiao apartment

LOS ANGELES—IF YOU HAVE SOME thing bad to say, please go away.

The order of the day: Keep quiet.

But all have a role to keep Manny Pacquiao perfectly focused.

Sisa me, there's barely a month left before Pacquiao's rematch with Mexico's Juan Manuel Marquez on December 15 and he officially declared war on the second month of training. It was his unbridled high-altitude camp in Guadalajara.

"I want to beat Pacquiao so badly I can taste it," Marquez told a Mexican boxing website.

But it's not stopping Sisa's cut to restore national pride, also singled out Pacquiao as Mexico's Public Enemy No. 1. (See former story on A22)

* * *

Nothing way-out there, actually.

Oh, the house is not haunting, and this info could eventually stick.

Sorry, but the news is distressing enough; it must be immediately relieved.

Two Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) cops were called into Pacquiao's gated Fullerton apartment here Sunday after midnight.

There was no trouble.

But the presence of the police confirmed that power, or whatever little remained of it, has been shattered in Pacquiao's favorite nest, where he

BARE EYE

Ricardo Privitivo

settles for the final part of training.

His moral anymore to tell these in charge that the place must be to relatively splendid shape as to ensure who'll be needing it for the Real pack in preparation for his Oct. 6 fight in Las Vegas.

* * *

Actually, there had been clear signs of trouble brewing, and this came in the open when Rudel Mayol intervened of the place, where he's supposed to be unpacked under Pacquiao's care, over the weekend.

Mayol obviously could not stand the stifling situation and opted for peace and privacy somewhere.

He soon received a text message from physical therapist Jeff de Guzman, who often lends a hand to Team Pacquiao.

Greg Jan Sison blacklisted at Pullman, which was also declared off limits to the troops," Jeff lured.

Gregorio Ling Asuncion, a trusted Pacquiao aide who works with the LA Sheriff's Office.

* * *

What happened at Pullacon, why were you prevented from entering?

"I was up on my way there when I saw two LA cops in the apartment," Asuncion said.

"Who called them in?"

"Rudolf Campos."

"Isn't he the one creating tension and trouble inside there? Why did Manny allow him to stay?"

"Well, he's really wise. He had the apartment registered under Manny and himself, because he was the one who booked for the place."

* * *

Asuncion, also called Sheriff by Filipino musicians, hated that two team mainstays, trainer Nonoy Nery and assistant Alex Ulano, had already packed up and were also on their way out.

Boxer Bonnie Torres, with whom Campos reportedly had a flaring confrontation, had left abroad.

From what Asuncion learned, he had to down the cops his key to the apartment and explain that he was called by Pacquiao to either visit or stay there.

Maybe Mitchell Campos wanted all of us different out, because we have been exposing his misdeeds, he's really a pest. Please tell that and quote me. He's as good. He has pending cases here and he's otherwise to Team Pacquiao."

"But how do things stand at Pullacon now?"

"Nonoy Nel and they were prevailed upon by Bobby Fernandez, who called from Cebu, to stay put. As for the LA cops, they said I could use the apartment anytime I wished."

"What about Rudolf Campos?"

"They are keeping watch over him. He has pending cases but there's no formal complaint yet. With one violation, they promised to warn him."

* * *

That's about it for now.

Powerful as Manny Pacquiao is, it's obvious he could not run his special spot here by remote control.

As for Campos, we had tried not to identify him as the point boiled by officers of the Pacquiao apartment in a previous column.

Of course, he had told people he wanted to see me immediately.

That was the reason I waited before the long Labor Day break here at PhilCanCi, where he had also been threatening.

I will be there again to get his side today.

Here's hoping he shows up to explain why LA cops had had to visit Pacquiao's special cozy love.

Hot Del Rosario, Zuave riders making waves

LEG TITLE: Robbie David of Team Zuave celebrates with a victory kick after topping the Novice-A 2-under division

SUBIC—REIGNING CHAMPION PALL DEL ROsario put away two rides while Team Zuave riders Robbie David and Butch Cunda posted big upsets in their respective divisions in the second leg of the 2007 Honda-BMP National Jet Ski Series at the Shoreline Beach here recently.

Del Rosario bested Peter Cruz, third merchants Tirrell Dan and Genachon signatories Brian Hernando for the finals cup crown and later annexed his class over Ong and Mike Mangio for the pro-nature Expert Runabout 1200 Unlimited phase.

David displayed superior moves in turning back fourth-seeded Sammy Boy Parilla to sweep the Novice-A Hydro-Jets.

Cunda likewise showed grit and determination to upstage first leg winner Alex Ang in the Novice 2-under division.

Romeo Mangonia Jr. made it a 1-2 finish for Team Zuave as engine problems bugged down Ang, who was forced to take a pit stop after being overtaken by Cunda in the closing stretch.

David and Parilla had a close fight right from the start but the former took a big drive to seize the lead for good as Parilla, stunned by a big splash of water, accidentally unplugged the lanyard.

Parilla settled for runner-up honors, followed by lady rider Ricky Reyes and Jhun Gundalan.

Other winners in the activity sanctioned by the Jet Sports Association of the Philippines were Bobby Del Rosario, Jun Ortinez and Yanik Elest.

Del Rosario captured the Executive-class crown, beating Joey Millanes, Mangio capped her second consecutive victory in the Women's Runabout division while Elest bagged the Open Sport title.

SPORTSWATCH

Chua: ABC-5 remains PBA's official covverer

THE PHILIPPINE BASKETBALL ASSOCIATION (PBA) is not the only thing changing between—at least for the 2007-08 Season.

PBA Chairman Sonny Chua said yesterday the next season will still be aired over ABC-5, the league's cohorts the past two years.

Chua made the announcement following a meeting with Bobby Romero, ABC-5's managing director, Monday night.

"We had a good talk," said Chua, who also as Red Bull chairman in the PBA board. "I assured Bobby that the PBA will honor the contract we have with ABC-5."

The PBA will open its 32nd season on Oct. 14 with the Barangay Ginebra Kings defending the Philippine Cup.

Generals repulse Dragons

REGAINING STYLE LIKE EMILIO AGUINALDO College thwarted Universal College of Manila's feisty rally to prevail, 77-73, and notch its fourth straight win yesterday in the fifth Universities and Colleges Athletic Association (UCAA) men's basketball tournament at the Rizalino Sports Complex in Las Piñas.

The Generals basked on the heroics of Junior Chavez whose drive and freethrow in the final 24.2 seconds gave EAC a 75-71 spread.

The heroics of Chavez, who finished with just nine points, came after Dragons freshmen Mac Miranda put UCM within 73-71, 1:01 to go.

In the other game, Nikko Pajaro banged a 28 points to power the Asian College of Business and Technology Lightnings past the Olivarez College Sea Lions, 80-64.

Long distance triathlon up

THE WHITE ROSE TRIATHLON WILL once again be hosted by White Knob Beach Resort in Subic, Zambales, on Oct. 6.

The country's premiere endurance race with more than of season starts at White Knob Beach resort, a 40km cycling ride through Zambales and a 10km run to Barangay west Subic.

Athletes from all over the country as well as foreigners from Singapore and the United States have signed up to participate.

Registration is open with deadline set on Sept. 15. For details, visit www.active.com.ph or contact Eddie Ino at 8557438801.

Executive Chess Saturday

THE FIRST MOBY CHESS EXECUTIVES AND PROfessionals Chess Challenge will unfold on Sept. 8 at the Greenhills mall, 21 Madison, Mandaluyong.

The tournament will be played over 7 rounds Swiss system, 25 minutes active-mode. All make use home appliances, medals, trophies and seven slots to the Grand Finals which will be held in December.

For details, contact GM Eugene Torre (09209209592), Dr. Jonny Wayne (09189120208), Julius Fortuna (09209191411) or lawyer Samuel Lotino (09189800584).

PCAP series starts today

QUALITY MATCHES RESUME AT MAKATI Coliseum as the Pinoy Cookers Association of the Philippines (PCAP) is staging its series ninth today.

At the end of the six-leg series, the participant with the most number of points will win the 2007 PCAP Champion of the Year award, presented by Governor Jun Dolfo by Rudy Salud and Wellson Co of W.U Sports and Amusement Corp.

Up next at Makati Coliseum is the Blitz Maximal 5-ating derby on Saturday with 2006 Zambales champion Flamier Kee on hold.

SJC hosts Showdown finals

WITH MORE THAN 1 MONTH'S LAYOUT, the championship round of Philippine Showdown 8-ball derby starts at the today at San Juan Coliseum.

Headlining the event is Filipino Showdown 8-ball derby starts at the today at San Juan Coliseum.

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JONES, Ababa in foot pursuit. JOE CANO

Aunzo, Ababa breathe down leader's neck

By Manny R. Castillo

SILANG, CAVITE—MARK FERNANDO held onto sleepier a hard-earned one-stroke pace 71 at The Riviera's Legacy Course here to keep a two-shot lead heading into the final three rounds of the season-long PGAP Qualifiers.

Ferdinand Aunzo and Jomel Ababa made their move while practically the entire 33-man field struggled, shooting identical 84's to choke the leaderboard and move within striking distance of Fernando.

Fernando, the leader since the first round, tore at the adjacent Canyon layout, dropped two shots in the last five holes to see his imposing six-shot lead at the start of the day dwindle to two over Aunzo with a 99-hole 210 total.

The 27-year-old Aunzo finished two of his last six holes before settling for a level 36-incoming bogey, digging for a card that matched Ababa's day best closed score in the flight ahead.

Ababa, the winner of the first Midland Golfers' Open, zoomed to third in the standings with a 361 aggregate after rebounding nightlythen a fourth-round 78 on Friday last week.

The 23-year-old Ababa, an ex-caddy from Agu Golf in Davao, made the turn at an even 35 before nailing three birdies against a bogey in his save six holes to move into contention.

"Many things could still happen, I just need to get that it out everyday here," Mark Fernando, a graduate of the Cabanatuan Golf program who shot a pair of 71s to draw out the first phase, told the bayanas in Filipino.

Anthony Fernando opened up with three straight bogeys on the way to a 42 and dropped from a second place tie to fourth, five behind his pace-setting cousin.

Another Jay Bayera turned in the day's low sub-par card—a 70, that moved him up a spot to fifth overall, his 363 total now one ahead of Asian Games bronze medalist Michael Bilat, who also had a 73.

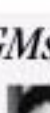
The lanky, 23-year-old Bilat lost his grip on fifth spot after a double bogey-7 on No. 15, where he took all of five shots to hit the green after spraying his drive into the left rough and then cutting a tree while trying to play out.

With only 54 holes to go, the seventh player, Cesar Bandoc, is now six shots off the pace and final after shooting a 75 for 372.

The top six players will be named to the Philippine squad that will play in the Seniors and Team Cup as well as the Southeast Asian Games in Thailand in December.

Super GMs joining Asian chessfest

By Ray Lauro



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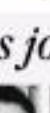

WANG

POWER HOUSE CHINA HEADS THE foreign contingent coming over for the Asian Individual Chess Championship slated at the Cebu International Convention Center from Sept. 10 to 20.

The Chinese, second placers in the 2006 Turin Chess Olympiad, will be spearheaded by super Grandmasters Wang Yue (Elo 2696), Bu Xiangzhi (2685), Ni Hua (2681), Zhang Pengxiang (2649), Ye Jiangchuan (2622) and Wang Hao (2626).

Among the other stars by stories are: Gibi Ehsan Ghaem Maghami and Ildibon Moradabadi of Iran, and GMs Krishnan Sasikiran, S Nadhuhan and Surya Shekhar Ganguly of India.

Indonesia is sending GMs Utut Adianto (2585) and Megaranto Susanto (2504) while Vietnam is also expected to field its top players in the event seeking a total prize of $40,000 (about P1.8 million).

All five Filipino GMs—Eugene Torre, Joey Antonio, Mark Bonjon, Nelson Mariano II and Rong Villamayor—are likely to take part in the event organized by the National Chess Federation of the Philippines.

Directors, however, will be focused on 13-year-old International Master Wesley So, the country's fourth-ranked player who is aiming for his second GM crush.

So was unable to compete in the recent Malaysian Chess Open after scoring two draws in five games, missing his chances to follow up on his first GM result obtained in Germany in 2005.

Also expected to contend are Ellen Oliver Dimalibot, Jayson Gonzales, Ronald Bancod and Jonbi Nadera. On-line Filipino Reuben in the Kuala Lumpur meet won by rising Chinese star Li Chao.

According to NCFP president Prospero Pichay, more than 130 top players from all over Asia and Pacific Islands, including Australia and New Zealand, have signified their intention to join the event sanctioned by the World Chess Federation (Fide).

For details, call NCFP secretary general Blaise Abraham "Bambol" Tabaniag or NCFP director Willie Ablaza at 5364909.

Orduna pips Macau bet, leads chase for Asian karting crown

YOUNG KARTING ACE JUDY ORduna captured the Mini-ROK crown recently in the third leg of the 2007 Asian Karting Open Championship at the Sentul International Circuit in Bogor, Indonesia.

Racing for the first time in Indonesia, the 12-year-old Orduna finished second in all three qualifying heats and nailed the pre-final race, clocking 10 minutes and 11.465 seconds. Orduna edged Macau bet Chang Wing Chung by just 0.281 seconds.

The win was enough to install the ninth grade student of Maria Montessori School as overall leader in the race for the Asian Karting Mini-ROK crown this year.

Orduna's Tuason Racing Southeast team-mate Julia Sarah Isabelle Sandoval was second in the Formula 125 Junior class runner-up honors and the latest ROK third place trophy.

Chang proved to be Orduna's biggest headache as he quickly grabbed the holeshot at the start of the final race.

Orduna, also the country's top bet in the World ROK Championship in Lonato, Italy next month, stuck close, driving with Chang throughout the race as they broke away from the pack.

Posting his fastest laptime of 58.128 seconds on the ninth lap, Orduna maintained his pace until he took an aggressive dive in the second to the last turn of the final lap to wrest the lead.

He eventually chained the checkered flag with a total time of 14 minutes and 8.298 seconds, just 0.1987 seconds ahead of Chang.

Hong Kong bet Chan Cheuk Hei snapped third place while Singapore Liam Lwai and Indonesian Aeshlin Sandoval secured upfinishes and fifth, respectively.

Orduna and Sarahs are headed for Cebu on Sept. 7-9 for the ninth leg of the National Karting Super Series at the Kart Zone in Mandaue, Cebu City.

A (MINI-)ANT Joey Orduna of Tuason Racing (#28) raises the trophy he won for clinching the Mini-ROK crown in the opening leg of the 2007 Asian Karting Open Championship recently at the Sentul International Circuit in Bogor, Indonesia.

Orduna will try to preserve his wide lead on the mini-ROK class while Sarahs aims to move up to third place overall in the junior division.

Lady booters join Asean tilt

By Mars Anthony Reyes

"KICK AS A TITTLER."

If for anything, that's what the HP women's football teams will be carrying when it competes in 2nd home championships starting Tuesday in Bogor, Myanmar.

The 'pumitlet and highly spirited squad is bracketed in tough Group A with defending champion Vietnam, Indonesia and Malaysia. Group B consists of Thailand, Singapore, Myanmar and Laos.

"In practice we tell our players to smile at their foes with the thought 'we're gonna kick your butt,'" said HP team manager Irma Marine of his charges during yesterday's PBA forum at the Shakey's EDSA avenue branch.

Herrera said the team has an average age of 16 and 10 lady boosters are holdovers from the squad that saw action in the 2005 Southeast Asian Games.

Bolstering the team are Filipino-Americans and 2006 ASEAN veterans Angelie Empeli-do and Mallory Dayot and rookies Shanni Whitehill and Sunita Dollesso-Burgos, a Filipina and Fil-Asian, respectively.

Though 21 players are going to Myanmar, Herrera said the final 18 will be named by coach Marlon Maro during the team manager's meeting tomorrow.

The Philippines will be facing Vietnam in the opening game on Saturday.

MIGAMETEUR CHAMP: Benjie Sumarano (standing left) receives his trophy from Action Group Inc. chair Antonio Tarabia Sr. after taking the Open division of the recent Mid Amateur Open at Malarayat Golf and Country Club in Lipa City. With Sumarano and Tarabia are MGOC golf director Mike Cerf and Pampanga' BJ Hocking. Sumarano won with a -10 total, one shot ahead of Mel Hechanova. Third was Bayot Zuniga.

GRAND CHAMP: Hobe Silver team Greats all past champions as it wins the Amateur-Baseball Association (ABA) Tournament organized by Chris Cimarron. The country's top Chinese commercial team is led by team owner Bobby Co and team Code Francisco and Wallay Li. Albert Labordo, Han Chua, Paul Bon, Brian Ngo, Arlen Tolete, Jerry Tan (team manager), Click Terrenio (MVP), coach Jerry Ong, Mike Lee, Adrian Wong, Rodolfo Go, Bernard Lip, and Tony Ko.

SPORTS

US OPEN

ROGER Federer tosses up a serve against Feliciano Lopez. At one point in their US Open matchup, Federer won 35 straight points on his serve en route to advancing.

Roger serves up another victory

Federer waxes hot on service, forges quarterfinal duel vs Roddick

AHOY! Roddick needs to make a mountain-size high in advance to the next round. The American is 1-11 (win-loss) against his next opponent, world No. 1 Roger Federer.

NEW YORK — ASKED IF HE REALIZED Roger Federer had won 35 straight points — yes, 35 — on his serve, Feliciano Lopez blinked his green eyes.

"I'm his server?" he replied.

Maybe he was clarifying the stat, maybe he was in disbelief. No matter. Monday night, Federer was off to play Andy Roddick in the quarterfinals at the US Open.

The streak came out of nowhere. The match was tied going into the third set, and Federer was down 0-40. Then, over a span of nine games, he won every point he served.

"Think about it: All it would have taken was one strong return by Lopez. One slightly off shot by Federer. One double fault.

Nothing. Not until was too late, right as Federer closed out the final game.

Told the remarkable statistic, Federer was correct — and impressed.

"What are you telling about?" he said. "That's awesome."

"Oh, come on. What have I done?" he said, playfully. "I should have broken him to win it. I no I wouldn't have to serve it out."

Federer owned top ranking, 3-6, 6-4, 6-1, 6-4, 6-2 in the fourth round, rallying after the Spanish left-hander caused him some early trouble.

"I was under a lot of pressure tonight," Federer said.

I tried to tell, especially when he got rolling. Tying for his fourth straight US Open title, the No. 1-ranked Federer faces No. 3 Andy Roddick.

Federer has done pretty well against the 2003 champion and the runner-up last year. In the time of 13-1, including nine straight wins.

"It's a great record, but it doesn't help me," Federer said. "We'll see how it goes. Andy's always tough at the US Open."

Roddick is the only American left, marking the first US Open since 1996 without at least two in the quarterfinals.

James Blake had a chance to join in, but missed on three match points and lost to No. 18 Tommy Haas, 6-4, 6-4, 2-6, 6-0, 7-6 (5).

Forever in the tournament, Blake ended his 8 for 9 slump in five set wins. His waiting service, the rowdy 2-Block, did its best to cheer him on, but the nails-needed Blake wouldn't come up with their last, winning shot.

"It's getting exciting for a little while," he said. Best another unfortunate learning experience."

Haas will play No. 4 Nikolay Davydenko in the quarters. He eliminated Lee Hyung-taik, 6-1, 6-3, 6-4.

Earlier, Roddick was leading, 7-6 (6), 2-0, when his fourth-round opponent, No. 9 Tomas Berdych, stopped playing because he had trouble breathing and left chagrin.

"I haven't been tested much this tournament, so far," said Roddick, who immediately went to the practice court to hit his steady strokes.

Almost from the get-go, Roddick knew Berdych was ailing.

"I could hurt, say something to the umpire early on in the first," Roddick said. "Then, of course, it's trying to eavesdrop on his whole conversation he's having with the trainer."

Said Berdych: "It wasn't any, like, straight case problem or one pain or something. Just like, generally didn't feel well."

On the women's side, five-time champ Justine Henin-Hardenne beat Victoria Azarenka, 6-2, 6-3, and moved on to play Agnes Szavay. The 18-year-old player from Hungary defeated Julia Vakulenko, 6-4, 7-6 (1).

Also, No. 16 Shahar Peer beat No. 30 Agnieszka Radwanska, 6-4, 6-1, and No. 6 Anna Chakvetadze stopped Tamira Paszek, 6-1, 7-5.

On Tuesday night, top-seeded Justine Henin plays No. 6 Serena Williams in the most attractive match of the day.

Also in action are No. 2 Rafael Nadal and No. 3 Novak Djokovic.

Concerned that the two women's quarterfinals set for Wednesday — Kuznetsova vs. Szavay and Chakvetadze vs. Peer — weren't dazzling enough, US Open officials changed the schedule.

The match between six-time major champion Venus Williams and No. 3 Jelena Jankovic was shifted from Tuesday to Wednesday night, with both players' approval.

AP

US ready to rock hoop world in Beijing Olympics

LAS VEGAS, NEVADA — All-genuine seeks to defend its gold medal and the US will be looking to make amends for missed opportunities when they compete in the Beijing Olympics basketball tournament next August.

The two international powerhouses became the first Dream Team members ever to qualify for the China Olympics, doing so at the Tiba American Olympic qualifying tournament which wrapped up Sunday at the Thomas and Mack Center.

The 2007 US national team has very many role players to be reunions for the Dream Team of the 1990s, but unlike its most recent predecessors this American squad seems to have figured out how to succeed at the international game.

"The Team USA is one of the best I have ever seen," Argentina head coach Sergio Hernandez said. "Nobody will ever forget the first Dream Team with Michael Jordan and Magic Johnson, but I like this USA team very much with Kobe Bryant and LeBron James. They really know how to play together."

The US is the early pick to win the gold in Beijing, but have not demolished in recent major international competition.

The USA has not been able to translate its fastest big into gold medals in the last three major international competitions, finishing sixth in the 2002 Worlds Championships and third in the 2004 Olympics and 2006 Worlds.

The US would earned an automatic berth to Beijing with a gold medal at the Worlds in Japan this summer, but a loss to Greece in the semifinals doomed that bid.

AP

Nowitzki, Parker lead squads past foes

MADRID, SPAIN — DIRK NOWITZKI scored 35 points and pulled down 11 rebounds as Germany survived overtime to beat the Czech Republic, 83-76, Monday on the opening day of the European Championship.

In Athens, where Tony Parker scored 16 as France held off Poland, 74-66, a last-second three pointer by Joks Lukovic lifted Greece over Olympic runner-up Italy 69-68, in Group D.

Defending champion Greece opened with a 78-68 win over Israel to a Group A match in Granada, where Andrei Kirilenko's 24 points and 12 rebounds led Russia over Serbia, 73-65.

NBA All-Star forward Pau Gasol scored 19 as Spain routed Portugal, 61-56, in Sevilla to begin its campaign to become the third country to claim the European trophy while holding the world title. And Latvia surprised Croatia, 65-77, in the other Group B match.

In Group C, three-time champion Lithuania rolled over Turkey, 83-69.

At Palma de Mallorca, Nowitzki scored 19 second-half points and four more in overtime as Germany rallied from an early deficit in their Group C game.

"This was a lot tougher than we thought it would be. But it was good that we held together," the Dallas Mavericks center said.

The Czechs led 51-45 at halftime thanks to 10 points from ex-Forward Lubos Barton.

But the Germans rallied in the second half behind Nowitzki, who hit a three-pointer to spark a 20-1 run that put Germany ahead 65-61 with 4:40 to go.

He connected on a one-handed jumper from the top of the key to put the Germans ahead 72-68 with 31 seconds remaining in regulation.

The Czechs closed to within 73-72 with 26 seconds to go before Ludvibe Kubalik took both free throws in the game before Mikhal Ostrava's last second desperation shot missed.

Nowitzki's second field goal in overtime put Germany ahead by three with 49 seconds to go. Jakub Koubka dunked after a Barton miss to pull the Czechs within one with 20 seconds left, but a pair of Dennis Ilen throws and a dunk by Demond Greene decided the game as the Czechs didn't get another shot until three seconds were left.

At the Centro de Tecnificacion, the lead changed four times in the last 30 seconds with Lukovic kicking his winner from more than meter behind the line — and then was snubbed by his teammates.

Massimo Bulleri's jump shot gave Italy a 65-64 lead — its first since it was ahead 9-8 in the first quarter — before Lukovic converted two free throws.

AP

CHINA Nowitzki tries to get a pass off the defense of Petr Benda.

Phil finally shoots down Tiger

PHIL Mickelson hits one of a number on his way to the victory.

NORTON, MASSACHUSETTS — PHIL Mickelson employed Tiger Woods on the front nine and closed with a 5-under 65 Monday to win the Deutsche Bank Championship by two shots.

It was the first victory for Mickelson since The Players Championship in May, after which he injured his wrist and lost much of the summer on the US golf tour.

Woods had only two birdies on the front and then made the turn with a bogey 5, putting him four shots behind Mickelson starting the final nine holes.

He wound up with a 67 and tied for second with Aaron Oberholser (69) and Ernie Els (70).

"For 10 years I've struggled against Tiger," Mickelson said. "This one feels great to get head to head. And over the last five or six holes when he's making a run, it was fun to match him with birdies."

Mickelson finished at 16-under 268 and earned $1,260,000, moving him atop the standings in the US PGA Tour Playoffs.

After dispatching of Woods, Mickelson picked his next battle with US PGA Tour commissioner Tim Finchem. He said he might not play next week outside Chicago at the BMW Championship, saying he cared to be near his son Evan Finchem had not fulfilled some requests that Mickelson has made. He did not elaborate.

Mickelson, who moved back to No. 2 in the world ranking with his 32nd career victory, took only 25 putts in the final round and built a five-shot lead at the turn.

AP

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Gov't allots P624B to service debts in '08

Interest payments to account for P295.8B

By Michelle V. Rosca

THE GOVERNMENT WILL SPEND P624.1 BILLION next year to settle maturing obligations, 1.8 percent higher than the allocation for debt service of P613.2 billion this year, documents from the Department of Finance showed.

The amount of debt service next year is equivalent to 8.6 percent of the projected gross domestic product (GDP) of P7.20 trillion for 2008.

The debt service-to-GDP ratio of 8.6 percent will be lower than the 9.3 percent programmed for this year. The drop in the ratio, despite an increase in the absolute amount of debt service, is a result of the expected increase in economic output.

GDP is expected to rise to P7.20 trillion from the revitalized P6.61 trillion this year.

The government's allocation for debt servicing has been monotonously on the rise since the government started incurring budget deficits in the late 1990s. The deficits have forced the government to borrow heavily here and abroad.

The government's outstanding debt has ballooned to P5.78 trillion as of June this year.

Finance officials explained that the government's debt, and consequently the amount spent for debt servicing, would only begin to drop once the government starts posting a surplus in its budget.

The Finance department, which **error persistent** the other day to Congress during a hearing on the proposed 2008 national budget, also claimed that of the amount allotted for debt service next year, the larger share of P328.3 billion will be for principal obligations. Interest payments will eat up P295.8 billion.

Only interest payments are automatically appropriated in the government's annual national budget. The allocation for payment of principal debts is usually from borrowings.

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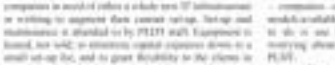

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Meralco rates to go down this month

Utility says rates to decrease by 68.46 centavos per kWh

By Abigail L. Ho

LOWER PURCHASED POWER cost and system loss charge will lead to a reduction in the rates Manila Electric Co. charges its customers this month.

The rate would go down by 68.46 centavos per kilowatt hour (kWh), Meralco said.

According to data from the distribution utility, its generation charge for the month of September would be pegged at P4.6943 per kWh, 68.26 centavos per kWh lower than the P5.2878 per kWh charged in August.

The reduction in Meralco's generation charge was a result of lower purchased power costs from its power suppliers, which included the National Power Corp., the subsidiaries electricity spot market, and independent power producers First Gas Power Corp. and Quezon Power Philippines Ltd. Cost of power sourced from Napocor dropped to P5.1150 per kWh in September, as compared with P5.1869 per kWh last month. Power sourced from WESM also went down from P6.5460 per kWh in August to P5.1297 per kWh this month.

Meralco's 25% borrower registered price increases.

The cost of power sourced from First Gas' 1,000-megawatt (MW) fm. This plant increased from P4.2096 per kWh in August to P4.4177 per kWh in September, while that from the 500-MW Sta. Lorenzo plant went up to P4.1634 per kWh from P3.8702 per kWh within the same period.

Power from QPPL plant also posted an increase to P4.4304 per kWh this month from P3.7403 per kWh last month.

But Meralco said its 30% supplied it with power at the lowest cost, averaging P4.2045 per kWh.

Apart from lower generation costs, Meralco also saw a lower system loss charge for the August billing month, translating to a charge of only 70.67 centavos per kWh this month from 84.57 centavos per kWh last month.

Last month, the generation charge was lower by 37.66 centavos per kWh while the system loss charge to residential users was down by 5.28 centavos per kWh," Meralco vice president for corporate communication Ilijo Cruz said in a statement. "Residential consumers will therefore, experience a combined reduction of 42.94 centavos per kWh in August. With the additional combined reduction of 68.46 centavos per kWh this September, the cumulative reduction that residential consumers will enjoy by August and September stands at P1.11 per kWh."

With these reductions, he added, residential consumers consuming 100 kWh a month will see their bills go down by almost P80 that month, while those consuming 200 kWh will experience a P146 reduction.

Meralco's commercial and industrial customers would likewise experience a significant reduction in their electricity bills, the levels for which Cruz did not specify.

A mini-Marshall plan

QUESTIONS OF POLICIES

Horacio C. Geneta

BRUNEI: JOSE DE venecia is running out of original ideas. On the back of the ongoing military adventure in Southern and with talks against the idea [illegible], he proposes a mini-Marshall plan for the Muslim areas in Mindanao.

Gen. George C. Marshall was the chairman of the US Joint Chiefs of Staff during World War II and President Roosevelt's most trusted military adviser. After the war, President Truman appointed Marshall secretary of state.

The US came out of the war as the richest and most powerful nation in history. Marshall got the US Congress to approve a plan...[unclear] known as the Marshall Plan—to use American largesse to rebuild and rehabilitate western and non-enemy European countries, including former enemies, Germany and Italy, on a huge scale unheard of in all of history.

Awash with cash, the US granted extremely soft loans to Western Europe. To be sure, the plan was not a one-way street. The loans enabled Europe to buy goods from the US, thereby alleviating American industry to shift from wartime to peacetime production.

It was not always such that created the Atlantic. American ranks were [illegible] to Davao to expeditionary [illegible] during the war. The Greeks had to learn how to handle the cantankerous American mules, which were twice as large as the Greek mules.

The Marshall plan was a resounding success. In the end, the Plan helped the retiring up of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (Nato), which held back the USSR, the Communist superpower.

If I recall right, it was then Vice President Teofisto Guingona who first proposed a mini-Marshall plan for Mindanao. Nothing came out of the proposal.

No mini-Marshall plan can be mounted and executed to succeed while the war against the Abu Sayyaf and the MILF goes on. The Marshall Plan succeeded because peace had settled down in Western Europe.

Also, we should learn from the Bandung experience. Twice a year, for over 200 hundred years from 1600, Moro pirates raided Brunei for booty and slaves. The Sulu fleet, of as many as 300 vintas, sailed along the Pacific side of the peninsula, entered San Miguel Bay in Camarines Sur, then up the Bicol River and all the way to the lake.

Finally, in 1838, a combined fleet from Brunei and Camarines, commanded by scorned rajanate of the Spanish navy, routed a large Moro pirate fleet off the Caramoan peninsula. Prince Noise, the Moro chief, was able to land in Albay. He was hunted down and executed.

The naval battle was the turning point in Bicol history. The Moros never returned and power settled down. As history would have it, at almost that time, the American shipping industry discovered that the abaca fiber in Albay was the best for making rope.

The first 38 tons of the fiber [illegible] in the market in Manila brought a handsome profit to its owner. By 1860, abaca fiber exports accounted for one-third of the country's dollar earnings. And what became the richest province.

Dr. Wenceslao should use his influence with the powers to help the armed Panays win the war in the shortest time possible. Then, and only then, should he mount a mini-Marshall plan.

ERC ruling seen to jack up power rates in Luzon

THE PHILIPPINE ELECTRICITY MARKET Corp., operator of the wholesale electricity spot market, will appeal an Energy Regulatory Commission ruling that can potentially boost taxes on power users by as much as P2.66 per kilowatt hour (kWh).

The ERC order in question effectively revised WESM's original high settlement prices for September and October last year.

The ERC ruling basically nullified the WESM board's decision to increase the prices for those two months, after its market surveillance committee reported market power abuse on the part of the Power Sector Assets and Liabilities Management Corp.

PSALM, which trades power generated by National Power Corp.'s independent power producers, accounts for most of the electricity supply traded at the electricity market.

PEMC president Leon Siokpianco said that, based on internal estimates, the ERC order would reduced to an increase of P0.25 per megawatt hour on the fund weighted average prices for those two months.

The ERC ruling was also welcomed by services that sourced power from the WESM during those months, would translate to an additional charge of around P0.66 per kWh for end-consumers.

"We'll file a motion for reconsideration as soon as our lawyers complete it," Siokpianco said in a text message to reporters.

The ERC ruling came about after the commission conducted its own inquiry on the alleged price manipulation issue at the WESM. During the investigation, the regulatory body ordered an adjustment of WESM prices for those months to match Napocor's rates, or no more than P4.18 per kWh, the lowest than the actual WESM settlement price.

The ERC, however, said it found no prima facie evidence against PSALM to merit further investigation. In light of this, the regulatory body ordered the PEMC board to reconsider the originally questioned high prices for September and October 2006. Abigail L. Ho

Stick to trade rules, DTI cautions crab exporters

By Bernie W. Dantiago

THE DEPARTMENT OF TRADE and Industry yesterday urged exporters of live crabs and lobsters to adhere to Taiwan's strict rules for shipments to maintain access to that lucrative market.

According to DTI data, exporters were able to post P600 million in sales in the past four months, after Taipei lifted its temporary ban of imports from the Philippines.

In December 2006, Taiwanese authorities informed the DTI's Bureau of Export Trade Promotion that it was suspending imports from the Philippines because traces of carcinogens—an antibiotic that is banned for fishery and aquaculture use—were found in some previous shipments of live crab and spiny lobsters.

Taiwan authorities believed that exporters, in a bid to decrease lobster mortality rate while in transit, may have used the banned nonlinear substances at the port of shipment.

Trade Undersecretary Thomas G. Aquino said the suspension was lifted after the government set up monitoring, control, and corrective measures to check the antibiotic residues of lobster exports.

He said the DTI, through the Trade and Investment Office in Taipei and the BETO and the Department of Agriculture's Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources took part in addressing the issue.

"The collaborative efforts of [these] agencies, and representatives of marine exporters have key elements that hastened the lifting of the ban," Aquino said.

"[That] prevented the loss of $11 million (about P518 million) worth of live crabs and live lobsters valued at $1 million (about P47 million)," he added. Long-term damage to the Philippine seafood exporters was also averted.

Aquino said that for exporters to maintain their access to the Taiwanese market, they must be accredited with BFAR.

NFA out to ensure stability of rice prices in lean months

By Amy R. Remo

THE NATIONAL FOOD AUthority is implementing several strategies to ensure the stability of rice prices and supply during the lean production months.

According to NFA Administrator Jessup B. Navarro, these strategies are meant to avert any upward movement in the price of rice.

"I will complement efficient rice distribution even as stocks have already been positioned for immediate market release," he said.

These strategies include strict market monitoring through the Bantay-Bigas program, where NFA officials are tasked to conduct market inspection.

Other programs include the monitoring of price movements of commercial rice stocks, and increasing rice allocations as incentives to retailers that adhere strictly to the rules of rice trading.

"We are always ready in its services to the market to prompt any unwarranted increase in prices, especially during the lean production period to ensure that rice is within reach of every Filipino," Navarro said.

He also assured consumers that the price of government rice will remain stable at P18 a kilo.

The NFA, he said, has also built up sufficient rice inventory for food security until the end of the year.

The agency has contracted a total of 1.89 million metric tons in rice imports for food security.

The total volume is slated to arrive in the country by September this year, he said.

As of the third week of August, about 1 million metric tons, or about 47 percent, of the total rice imports have already arrived to augment the NFA's inventory, said Navarro.

The NFA's good quality low-priced rice, according to Navarro, is available through the Tindahan Natin rice outlets, the Kadamay sa Gloria sa Palengke and the agency's accredited and licensed retailers.

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Japanese company pushes Ilocos coco project

By Amy R. Remo

600,000 hectares needed for biofuel feedstock

JAPANESE FIRM TOYO ENGINEERING Corp. is set to complete a feasibility study on an integrated coco-methyl ester (CME) manufacturing plant that it plans to put up in the Ilocos region.

The venture, which will require at least P60 million, will need around 600,000 hectares of coconut farms to grow soon.

The new feedstock will use high-yielding coconut varieties.

Taiche B. Gatpo, deputy administrator of the Philippine Coconut Authority, said Toyo Engineering was looking at the possibility of developing fresh or new areas where coconut can be planted to supply the feedstock requirement of the CME plant.

Toyo Engineering is expected to commencing areas in Region I such as Pangasinan, Ilocos Sur, Ilocos Norte and La Union.

Another alternative, according to Gatpo, was to use the wide coastal areas of these provinces.

He estimated that opening up new areas for coconut farms would require a bigger investment of about P1 million a hectare; while using coastal areas would need only P500,000 per hectare.

The entire output of the plant will be shipped to Japan to supply the country's growing demand for biofuels, both for fuel-dependent industries and manufacturing countries and also for its automotive industry, which is now producing hybrid vehicles.

Japan's toxic diesel requirement reaches 43 billion liters a year and plans for a CME blend of 3 percent will create a huge demand for this additive.

It is one of the four Asian economies planning to mandate the blending of CME with petrodiesel to reduce dependence on crude mineral oil.

The local coconut industry, which has yet to recover from the devastating effects of typhoons Reming and Milenyo last year, recorded a decline in output of 4.88 percent in the first half of 2007.

Coconut prices, however, bounced back from last year's slump and increased by 23.07 percent this year.

The increase in copra prices triggered the demand for processed coconut that, in turn, pushed up prices at the farm level.

Demand for Philippine agricultural feedstocks have been surging with the interest especially among Chinese companies.

Among the companies from China, Shandong Tong Jian formed up negotiations with them to set up companies for the construction of these separate plants worth a combined $1.01 million.

Documents from the Department of Agriculture showed that Shandong Wing is pursuing partnerships with 50-integrated Biofuels Co., Jiangsu Sinodawa Integrated Biofuels and Oils Corporation Resource Development Inc.

Another company, Abo Fabras Agricultural Science and Technology Development Co. Ltd., has started project validation and seed testing on Jatropha by-product corn and sweet sorghum in Cagayan Valley, Subsidy, Metro Dojo and Bargaintown.

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STI plans to raise ₱1.5B from public offering

By Elizabeth Sanchez-Lacson

SYSTEMS TECHNOLOGY INSTITUTE (STI), one of the country's biggest networks of information and communications technology-oriented colleges, is planning to list on the Philippine Stock Exchange (PSE) starting next year, STI executive committee chair Isaidro Tinsay said.

On the sidelines of a signing ceremony at the PSE in Makati last Monday, Tinsay said STI could raise at least ₱1.5 billion from a possible listing of roughly 30 percent of the company's capitalization of ₱5 billion.

After an initial public offering (IPO), STI's market capitalization is expected to swell to ₱16 billion (about $380 million).

Proceeds from the offering are expected to fund the school's expansion, including a ₱500-million school building at the Fort Bonifacio Global City in Taguig City. The school, which will have an area of 2,700 square meters along the Investment Drive, will be completed by June next year, Tinsay said.

The basic contract for the new school building was recently awarded to STI by the Bases Conversion Development Authority (BCDA) for its Campus Gateway project.

The eight-story complex will house a modern school, a research and development center and state-of-the-art gymnasium. It is part of STI's ₱1.5-billion expansion program that also included the recent establishment of the OLO-STI Megacentre in Marquinell, investments to Zobel Ramos-STI Medical Center and the ongoing expansion of STI campuses through the acquisition of properties in various areas nationwide.

Tinsay added that STI was building a 2,000-square meter campus in Cebu.

He said STI was in a shopping mode for campuses in other schools to expand its course offerings.

Information and Communications Technology Academy, or iAcademy, which is a part of the STI family recently partnered with PSE to offer to the public a 12-session course starting in October on financial analysis. The course will allow students to acquire more sophisticated skills in participating in the stock market.

Eyes listing on Singapore, RP bourses

Pacifica gets SEC nod to return to mining

THE SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE Commission (SEC) has approved the application of listed holding company Pacifica Inc. to return to the mining business.

In a disclosure, Pacifica said the SEC approved last Sept. 3 changes in its articles of incorporation and the par value of its shares from ₱1 to ₱0.001.

In view of this, the Philippine Stock Exchange has lifted a trading suspension on the company implemented last July 30.

Under Pacifica's amended articles of incorporation, its primary purpose will now allow it to engage in the discovery, exploration, development and exploitation of mineral oils and gaseous substances, gold, silver, copper, iron and other metals or minerals.

Pacifica was also able to secure the consent of the SEC to extend its corporate life for another 50 years after the expiry date last Sept. 2.

Pacifica was incorporated on Sept. 2, 1937. On April 29, 1998, the stockholders approved the change in the primary purpose of the company from a mining to a holding company.

The company has not commenced operations since the change in its primary purpose from a mining to a holding company in 1998, it disclosed in a recent financial report. In addition, there were no major activities undertaken by the company from 1998 to 2006.

Also, the company incurred continuing net losses which resulted to a deficit of ₱63.62 million and ₱80 million as of the end of 2006 and 2005, respectively.

Elizabeth Sanchez-Lacson

BSP urged to liberalize FCDUs

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE BANGKO SENTRAL NG PILIPINAS was urged to ease restrictions in the investment your funds (IITFs) and foreign currency deposit units (FCDUs) as part of its efforts to bring down barriers to overseas investments.

BSP Deputy Governor Nestor Espenilla Jr. told reporters the bank's ongoing initiatives will be geared primarily to allow banks to include the liberalization of investments in FCDUs and UITFs in its ongoing foreign exchange deregulation program.

"The idea is that UITFs could also invest overseas. That's their idea but our interest's mainly any deviation on it," Espenilla said.

The BSP earlier doubled to $12 million the amount of investments that residents can invest abroad without having to seek approval from the policy-making Monetary Board.

Espenilla said the current liberalization covered only individual investors and thus did not include UITFs.

UITFs, an improvement of the common trust funds, are investments pooled by banks' trust departments from retail clients that are invested in a variety of instruments such as bonds or money market papers.

Espenilla said the BSP has also received a proposal from banks to liberalize dollar purchases for FCDUs.

"We're still studying it," he said.

A few years ago when the peso was under heavy pressure in the foreign exchange markets, the BSP curbed banks' on dollar-buying in FCDUs to curb opportunities to use these deposit accounts as an instrument to speculate against the local currency.

The proposals to ease restrictions in UITFs and FCDUs as part of an ongoing liberalization program were mentioned in a joint publication by the University of Asia & the Pacific and the Ford Works group.

"The BSP should liberalize the capital account by allowing ordinary citizens (not only large firms) to diversify their portfolios with assets including foreign currency deposits (including buying dollars for FCDU accounts and allowing banks/UITFs to include foreign shares," the publication said.

"Such a policy would not only allow the country's aggregate savings to be diversified it would also reduce the concentration of net peso claims given that around eight trillion PS [pesos] live and work in countries all over the globe," it explained.

Stocks close 1.7% lower on Meralco selloff

MARKET PRICES CLOSED 1.7 PERCENT lower yesterday with the key index dragged down by an extended selloff in Manila Electric Co. (Meralco), the nation's biggest power distributor, dealers said.

They said Meralco was again punished amid fears its profits will be hurt by a lower tariff cut set by regulators.

The composite index fell 56.84 points to 3,312.30, off the day's low of 3,308.97, on volume of to 2.7 billion shares worth ₱3.2 billion.

Decliners outnumbered gainers 101 to 35, while 64 stocks ended flat.

The broader all-share index dipped 32.28 points at 3,114.57.

"The downturn was induced by the selloff in Meralco. It prompted other investors to take profits early on from the recent gains," said Francisco Liboro of PCCI Securities.

Liboro said foreign funds besides unloaded Meralco shares in anticipation of a stock dividend declaration today by the power company.

"The foreign mentality with regard to stock dividends is more negative" than how local investors see it, Liboro said.

Meanwhile, some local brokerages "may have targeted in their forecast the full rate hike that Meralco was eyeing." With no future leads in sight, investors themselves look in profits from recent gains in blue chips.

"Most investors realized gains from the previous rallies while others opted to wait-out how the economy in reeling of US stocks recuperate from," said Lawrence de Leon of Accord Capital Equities. AFP

Gov't allots ₱624B ...

From page B1

ings. The amount for payment of principal debt next year will eat up 59 percent of the P344.1 billion that the government intends to borrow in 2008.

The amount of principal payments for next year is 6 percent higher than the P608.5 billion set for this year. The increase in principal payments is consistent with the government's aim of lessening debt reduction.

The government wants to reduce its debts to levels considered "sustainable" by credit-rating agencies. According to international standards, a debt is considered "sustainable" if it is 50 percent or less of GDP.

The government's outstanding debt is projected to reach P3.39 trillion next year, equivalent to 54.2 percent of GDP. This will be a slight improvement from the 58.4 percent estimated for this year.

Finance officials said the government could easily reduce its debts to sustainable levels after posting a balanced budget next year.

The government's target of balancing the budget next year is anchored on the expected increase in revenue collection arising from tighter audit of tax collection and the sale of government assets deemed better run by the private sector.

RP seen to meet GDP target

BSP expects economy to grow by at least 6.1% in '07

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE BSP-LED SURVEY NG PELIPINAS is confident that the country's economy will grow in expected ...anywhere from 6.1 to 6.7 percent ...within the projected slowdown in export earnings this second semester.

"There are certain developments in the US and Europe that may affect the performance of Philippine exports, particularly when economic growth channel links in that will result in some moderation of demand for export products," BSP Governor Amando Tetangco Jr. told reporters at the sidelines of a congressional hearing.

"That can have affect our growth ... there may be changes in the speed, but we're confident that the 6.1-6.7 percent (growth in gross domestic product) will be met," he said.

GDP, the single most important indicator of economic performance, serves as the total monetary value of goods and services produced by the domestic economy in a given period.

In the second quarter, the country posted a GDP growth of 7.3 percent—the highest in 20 years—which brought the first semester average growth to an impressive 7.2 percent.

However, rising delinquency in the high-risk or subprime housing mortgage market in the United States has caused a credit crunch in the world's largest economy and created negative ripples across global financial markets. This came about after several US banks invested in structured financial products exposed to the problematic housing sector.

A possible slowdown in the US economy, the biggest consumer of Philippine exports, is thus expected to weigh down on the country's export earnings. Also, stiff competition among global suppliers of electronic products is seen to depress export earnings of local manufacturers.

For this year, the BSP itself has cut its export growth forecast to 8 percent from 11 percent.

Tetangco's fears are complicated about the adverse impact of the peso's appreciation against the US dollar like you.

"The peso is determined by market forces," Tetangco said. "The role of the BSP is as basically smoothen sharp fluctuations in the rates. What you are sure is the result of the factors that are taking place in (the domestic market as well as abroad."

The BSP chief was referring to the strong influx of remittances from overseas Filipinos, as well as foreign investments that had jacked up peso value against the US dollar by 5 percent so far this year.

"What we have done is to use this opportunity of substantial foreign exchange inflows to build up reserves that has, in effect, increased domestic liquidity," Tetangco said.

He added that the BSP and the national government had also used excess dollars flowing in the system to pay off some foreign debts ahead of maturity.

Uncertainties on the weather, on top of continuing global financial market jitters, have also prompted the government's economic managers to be cautious over growth forecasts for the rest of the year.

"We'll stick to the 6.1-6.7 percent target," Finance Secretary Margarito Teves told reporters in a separate interview. "I don't want to predict anything higher than that. Tomorrow know what the environment will look like in the next six months.

"We're hopeful that we'll go beyond the target but we won't say it with certainty."

Pharma-funded NGO hits Roxas medicine bill

By Dimitri L. Lucas

AN INTERNATIONAL LOBBY group allied with the global pharmaceutical industry has urged policymakers to address ethical and weaknesses in the local healthcare system, like the poor utilization of the national health insurance scheme.

At the same time, the London-based International Policy Network (IPN) did not agree with the need to relax the patents law as advocated by Sen. Manuel A. Roxas II, while contending that Filipinos' access to medicine remains limited.

A statement released by the group distributed at yesterday's "Symposium on Intellectual Property Innovation and Health" quoted IPN director of policy Philip Stevens, who questioned whether patents really do drive up drug prices and despite the poor utilization, the country's healthcare.

"Framing the issue in such black and white terms distracts attention from the real causes of ill health in countries such as the Philippines, which revolve more around poverty and inadequate health infrastructure," he said.

Stevens added that "it is time to leave rhetoric and ideology aside and recognize and deal with the actual causes of poor rates of access to medicines for the most disadvantaged."

"Rates of access to essential medicines—majority of which are off patent—are unacceptably low in many parts of the world," the group said.

According to the Center for Media and Democracy's source-monitoring website SPW "is a nonprofit-funded campaigning group based in the United Kingdom."

The "most majority" of IPN's income from donations is from corporations, the watchdog said.

Yesterday's healthcare forum at the Manila Hotel also had as a speaker economist Raveendra Dipka Jr., who stressed the need to jettison the exact blueprint to access to medicines by the poor.

"It is patents by multinational pharmaceutical companies, in certain policies by government such as taxes and tariffs on medicines or the other benefits to manufacturers, or what?" he asked.

The economist challenged the view that patent laws are the cause of expensive medicines in the country, as espoused by Senator Roxas.

"If it can be established that the restrictive patent system by pharmaceutical companies is the main culprit, then state government regulation is the answer," he said.

Local IT firm opens salvo of acquisitions

By Raemel W. Domingo

LOCAL FIRM EDSANCO SOFTware Corp. yesterday announced it had acquired counterpart firm Absalom Systems in the first of a planned series of overseas acquisitions.

GSC chief executive Jose Ortanez said in a statement his company was acquiring Absalom's operations in Singapore, Australia and South Africa for $10 million, a move that would quadruple GSC's client network.

GSC develops proprietary software solutions, delivers implementation services, and provides after-sales support services to clients around the world, while Absalom develops and markets human resource information systems and solutions.

"GSC plans to integrate Absalom's existing, proprietary products and services into its core portfolio of complementary products and services, which would extend the GSC solution portfolio," Ortanez said.

He added that the Absalom acquisition provided GSC ownership of the intellectual rights to Absalom's popular Smart HR and Employee Self-Service (ESS) software.

Smart HR is a suite of applications that enables companies to efficiently manage HR functions and processes electronically.

ESS is a Smart HR module that allows employees to update personal records, request and manage leave credits, and access other employment and personal information up-to-date.

Further, Ortanez said the acquisition was the first step in the implementation of a strategic plan to accelerate growth through acquisitions of small, niche software consulting firms and rights to intellectual property that complement GSC's own products and services.

"The market for vertical software is expanding very rapidly," he said. "To provide maximum leverage in moving this demand, we need to complement our organic growth by acquiring companies whose product portfolios complement ours."

The combined company would consist of a shared back office in Manila delivering product development, customer service, and information and communications technology services for all clients.

Asia stocks hit 1-month highs, but Nikkei dips

Worries over global credit squeeze ease; all eyes on US data

HONG KONG—ASIAN STOCKS notched one-month highs yesterday as worries about a global credit squeeze continued to ease, but caution ahead of a thousand US data this week kept a lid on markets and major currencies.

Tokyo's Nikkei rigged as investors worried about recent disappointing economic data, while sale factors Japanese government bonds (JGBs) rose after an auction of 30-year notes received little demand.

"The worst from the US subprime mortgage crisis appears to be over, and the crisis question left is whether the Fed will lower interest rates at its Sept. 18 meeting," said Kim Shin-kyun, an analyst at Korea Investment and Securities.

MSCI's measure of Asia Pacific stocks excluding Japan rose 0.5 percent by early yesterday afternoon after traders reaching levels last seen on Aug. 1, but Tokyo's Nikkei average fell 0.6 percent, extending Monday's 0.3 percent dip.

Hong Kong's Hang Seng index hit a record high, led by China Construction Bank after Beijing said it would restore the bank's plans for a domestic share sale.

Australia's S&P/ASX 200 index climbed for a fourth straight session, up 0.4 percent at a six-week closing high, boosted by data showing stronger-than-expected economic growth in the past quarter.

Korea Exchange Bank fell 3.7 percent higher, after climbing as much as 8.2 percent at one stage following news that Europe's biggest bank BNP PC will buy 51 percent of the South Korean lender.

HSBC's Hong Kong shares edged up 0.1 percent.

The MSCI index has risen in the past two weeks and is now up 19 percent from a five-month trough plumbed on Aug. 17 but still down about 8 percent from its July 24 record high.

Markets have generally been on a recovery path since the US Federal Reserve slashed a key lend-lending rate on Aug. 17 to help ease fears of a credit shortage stemming from the US subprime mortgage crisis.

Commerzbank's 28 Petroleum George W. Bush and Fed chief Ben Bernanke late last week about tackling the credit problem have further helped share up investment.

Asian investors took a wait-and-see attitude ahead of a flood of US data, keeping the major currencies in a narrow range.

"The panic is almost over, but the market has lost its direction and is waiting for more news, especially any good news," said Eladio Tabelin, currency strategist at bank of Tokyo-Mitsubishi IFG. "People know it'll take more time to restore normal market conditions. There is no quick solution."

The dollar bought 115.84 yen little changed from 115.97 yen in London trade on Monday, while the euro was at $1.3622 compared with $1.3624 in London.

Against the yen, the single currency was also steady was 157.76 yen.

But the Australian dollar jumped to a 6-week high near $2.70/$3 cents after rising economic growth data, revived speculation of interest rate hikes.

Japan's benchmark 10-year JGB yield eased two basis points to 1.615 percent after the 1.6 cent JGB auction. Reuters

Oil prices rise on hurricane concerns

SINGAPORE—OIL PRICES ROSE TEETER-day as traders monitored the past outbreak of an Atlantic hurricane can construct the storm could hurt oil and gas infrastructure in the Gulf of Mexico.

Light, sweet crude for October delivery rose 8 cents from Friday's close to $74.12 a barrel in after electronic trading on the New York Mercantile Exchange, midmorning in Singapore.

Prices trade was closed Monday for the US Labor Day holiday. Friday, the October Nymex crude contract added 60 cents to settle at $74.04 a barrel, a four-week high.

Prices have been supported by worries over Hurricane Felix, which grew into a Category 4 storm Monday before losing a bit of its punch and weakening to a Category 4 as it churned for way into the open waters of the Caribbean Sea. By Tuesday in Asia, Felix looked less likely to hit the Gulf of Mexico, where key refineries are located.

Crude oil prices rose as much as 56 cents from Friday's close as electronic trading overnight as traders eyed the movements of the hurricane.

Market participants are keeping an eye on Hurricane Felix, but at this point it doesn't really look like it'll affect oil and gas facilities in the Gulf of Mexico," said Ong Eng Kiat, an energy analyst with Pacific Ocean-Gulf early Tuesday. From there, if you proceed to make northern Honduras, slam in to southern Belize on Wednesday and then cut across northern Guatemala and continue Mexico, well south of Texas.

"But the hurricane is a reminder to everyone, both sellers and buyers, the peak hurricane season, as the crude oil futures market continues to face upward pressure," Meera said.

Oil prices have also been supported by US government reports that consumer spending and factory orders rose in July. Energy investors pay close attention to economic data because an economy's strength is seen as a barometer of demand for oil and gasoline.

October futures crude futures fell 15 cents to $73.16 a barrel on the SIX futures exchange in London. AP

A WORKER cleans up sandy pickled cotton at a farm in Shihezi, northwest China's Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region. China's rapidly expanding economy risks boiling over although overall demand is not currently exceeding supply, a senior official said on Tuesday. AFP/EPA

Coal rush worsens global warming—WWF

SYDNEY—GROWING DEPENDENCE on cheap coal to power rapid economic growth in Asia Pacific could undermine efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions that is blamed for harmful changes in the world's climate, experts said on Tuesday.

Between 2000 and 2006, coal use increased the world's gases by an unexpected 30 percent. Asia, led by China, accounted for almost 90 percent of the growth, the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) said at the launch of a climate change report in Sydney.

"The Asia Pacific region is on a collision course with regard to coal use, and is grappling with the difficult question of how to balance burgeoning energy needs with the well-being of the planet and local communities," the WWF report said.

Coal, the most abundant conventional fossil fuel, is responsible for a quarter of the world's total carbon emissions.

According to the International Energy Association, economic growth in India and China will account for 70 percent of the increase in global coal consumption by 2030, primarily in the electricity and industrial sectors.

The WWF said total emissions are four emissions increased by 31 percent between 1990 and 2004. If left unchecked, global coal-related emissions will increase by 65 percent by 2030, compared to required reductions per reductions of about 56 percent by 2050 to keep climate change at manageable levels.

To avoid the dangerous environmental impact of climate change, governments must reduce the use of fossil fuels and ensure that new coal-fired power plants are equipped with low or zero emissions using carbon capture and storage technology, the report said.

The WWF also recommended that Asia-Pacific countries increase the use of renewable energy, develop new emission technologies and put a stop to large-scale deforestation.

Climate change is a major issue at the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (Apec) summit in Sydney this week.

The WWF urged Apec countries, which account for about 60 percent of the world's economy to set binding targets on emission reductions to cover 2012 Reuters

The first phase of the UN Kyoto Protocol climate change pact runs out in 2012 and there are growing diplomatic efforts to find a formula that brings rich and developing nations together to curb emissions growth of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases.

Scientists say time is running out to stop climate changes caused by a buildup of these gases in the atmosphere.

Big polluters such as China, India, the United States and Australia are finally opposed to limiting emissions out, saying this will harm their economies.

Developing nations who want rich countries to open to deep cuts first. Environmental industries would be much of the groundwork gas pollution already in the air.

While no binding targets for greenhouse gas reductions are expected to be agreed at the Apec summit, analysts say officials might back a successor to a replacement for Kyoto. Reuters

Asia luxury market seen growing 12%

HONG KONG: DEMAND FOR LUXURY goods and services in Asia could grow by 12 percent a year to reach $200.7 billion in 2016, reflecting the region rising affluence, MasterCard projected on Tuesday.

In China and India, the fastest growing of Asia's major economies, demand for luxury items will be led by those under 35 who are either single or married with no children, according to the credit card company's forecast.

In the rest of the region it will be those who are over 60, either retired or still working, driving demand as their have accumulated wealth and have time to spend and travel, the company said.

In Australia, the average age of an owner of a Harley Davidson motorcycle was 46 in 2006, while in Japan women over the age of 55 are the most active internet travel bookings after the under-25s.

Japanese have the largest life expectancy in the world, followed by Hong Kongers, and older Asian consumers are living increasingly active lives.

However, since they tend to live in small apartments in cities like Tokyo and Hong Kong, they tend to spend more on luxury services like travel rather than goods, MasterCard said.

Demand in Japan for luxury goods and services among older consumers contrasts—in the top third of wealthy retired households—more than double to $67.8 billion by 2016, from $27 billion in 2006, MasterCard estimates.

In China and India, luxury demand is being spurred by young, urban professionals whose incomes are rising fast.

They are keen on buying goods that symbolise success.

MasterCard sees demand in China for luxury goods and services among young premium consumers—the top third of income earners aged under 35 with no children—rising to $28.4 billion by 2016 from $10.4 billion last year.

The second-fastest rising luxury consumer market, which is expected to hoist $35.2 billion by 2016.

India would be Asia's third biggest market, although much smaller, with demand from young premium consumers more than doubling in the next decade to $6.6 billion by 2016, according to MasterCard. Reuters

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BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Cebu City Government thru its BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE (BAC), invites all interested manufacturers, suppliers, bidders and/or distributors to apply for eligibility and to submit BIDS for the SUPPLY of various items as follows:

Item	Name of Project	Location	Brief Description	Approved Budget for the Contract	Date of Bid Opening	Time of Bid Opening
1	500 Assay Hospital Bulletin and other items	CCMC	for patients treated with HIV/AIDS (1 LOT)	4,340,000.00	Sept 20, 2007	9:00 a.m.

Prospective bidders having the minimum experience, capability and financial standing as stated in the 2nd paragraph of the IRR of RA 9184 and the schedule as follows:

ACTIVITIES	Schedule Date
1. Issuance of Bid Documents	September 6-19, 2007
2. Pre-Bid Conference	September 11, 2007
3. Submission & Opening of Bid Docs	September 20, 2007
4. Evaluation of Bid Documents	September 19-21, 2007
5. Post Evaluation	September 24-27, 2007
6. Notice of Award	September 28, 2007

Bid documents may be available only to eligible bidders upon payment of non-refundable amount as indicated under Item of the Bid Documents' above to the Cebu City Treasurer's Office Cashier.

The Cebu City Government reserves its unquestionable discretion or prerogative to reject any bid, or waive any defect therein and to accept bids as may be considered advantageous to the government.

(Sgd.) FRANCISCO L. FERNANDEZ
Chairman

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MOTOR

Editor Cesar D. Mangosing

Coty comparo fests rev up anew

30 motoring journalists put 97 new vehicles in the Philippines to the test to make the Pinoy more empowered buyers

By Tonyk Salazar

CHOICES, CHOICES, Choices. For motorists who already own cars (last year in past Car of the Year (Coty) Philippines' awards, the award is an affirmation that an informed choice had been made, and nothing had been left to chance.

For those about to buy a car—it would, indeed, be wise to follow the ongoing Car of the Year test-bore-down. Coty jurks could be considered the last word in industry evaluations.

Likened to an election

Car of the Year Philippines, also interchanged The Dream 2007 Car of the Year Philippines Awards, held in cooperation with the Automobile Association Philippines, can be likened to an election in which each motoring journalist is cashed in vote limited on the riding and driving experiences of almost all types of cars introduced within the period given.

The Coty car fiesta are unique in the country. No other industry-wide evaluation program gathers this many motoring journalists and media personalities and for an exhaustive and comprehensive group test-drive system of the Coty's Car Awards Group Inc.—Coty.

The variety of cars involved—from the basic people carriers to ultra luxury sports executive cars—is as wide as the motoring journos coming there.

Member-journalists

No member does, that Coty member-journalists believe the one-for-a-purpose interiors of the public's preferences. The members are everyday motorists as well, who happen to be motoring magazine and broadsheet writers, columnists, broadcast media and Web-based writers. They had their different social backgrounds who are well aware of the needs and wants of their own reading public.

As the Coty test fests, these journalists get their fill of almost all the cars introduced for the particular awards period. There are the budget, executive, luxury and ultra luxury vehicles.

Revised evaluation sheets

The revised Coty evaluation sheets to be filled up by each member during

CONTINUED

WINDSHIELD
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NOT REPLACEMENT: EMISSION (TM)
MANILA MIDWEST

Riding school to open next month

Text and photos by Charles G. Rubon

WE DON'T HAVE TO LOOK to the numbers. TV and newspaper reports are convincing enough to tell us that motorcycle-related accidents are becoming quite common these days.

This is no longer surprising as more Filipinos fall in love with these fuel-efficient, relatively inexpensive machines—their million in the last years.

"Add to the fact that they are quite easy to operate, a lot of people thought going to a riding school is no longer needed. On the contrary, if they allow themselves to be taught the correct riding procedures, techniques and even proper motorcycle maintenance, this will contribute a lot in minimizing accidents that can cause injuries and repair/parts damages to property," says Geraldine Bernas, president and Gm of Honda Philippines Inc.

Bernas was recently appointed president of Honda Safety Driving Center (HSDC), a newly-formed unit, which, nonprofit company that aims to promote road safety and rider or driver education.

2.4-hectare property

Scheduled to be finished first month, the HSDC will rise on a 2.4-hectare property located on Km 37 East Service Road, South Super Highway, Muntinlupa City, Honda Philippines' 6th motorcycle riding school.

Its first incorporation—Honda Philippines, Asian Honda Motor Co. Ltd. and Honda Cars Philippines Inc.—have contributed P1.79 million to make the center one of the state-of-the-art riding/driving schools in the world and largest in the Philippines.

The HSDC is the latest addition to the 40 traffic education centers and driving safety facilities that Honda operates in 21 other countries around the world.

"We believe that our commitment must not end with just manufacturing high-quality and technologically advanced motorcycles and vehicles. We could contribute a lot in advancing safety education here in the country," said Takeshi Sekiguchi, HSDC trustee and president and Honda Cars Philippines Ltd who added that

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The everyday BMW

BMW 120i

THE IDEA OF AN EVERYDAY BMW IS a concept that even I have trouble with. A quick glance at the buying power in entry-level products that help draw first-time customers into the brand is all about. But cheapest in this case is never the best. Tyranny rules with those cash-born Munich axe-image and performance, factors that increase your probability while engine size and, consequently, arab price.

If you are going to spend a hefty sum of money to put one in your garage, the least you'd like to get the model with the most value, the best bang for your hard-earned buck. This is where it gets tricky.

Price of admission

The 1 Series is the minimum price of admission into the world of BMW, but the full experience starts at the 120i. Smaller engines just don't match up with the 120i. Those who remember the smallest two-litre five-liter is just priced too close to the sophisticated 3-Series. This relatively small gulf into the entry-level 3-Series more where one realizes that the 1 Series is challenged for true, useful

My drift

Andre Fabus

everyday space.

In the task of meeting public demand for the everyday BMW falls squarely on the lap of the 3-Series range. Practical enough for a family of three plus luggage, this is a car with particular variants that easily deliver impeccable image and true, road-going performance.

Four door hatch starts at the 150 bhp 320i and culminates in the 335i with 300 bhp and 400 Nm of torque, each of BMW's first twin-turbo engine. Either of these two cars have been fun to drive since when it comes to this everyday BMW argument. Where the two-litre gas falls short of truly remarkable performance, the 335i has but a single shortcoming: price.

There is but a single model that balances value and style-seeking, turbo gobbling satisfaction while delivering the day-to-day versatility of a four-door family sedan. The 320i like balance we seek to the search for the everyday BMW can be found in the 320i.

Quite impressive

Just on paper, the engine numbers of the 320i are already quite impressive. Horsepower is decent at over 160 bhp but the available torque is what makes this car shine. At just over 2,000 rpm, 400 Nm of point will release drivers with an incredible force that make even the most jaded of entire break into uncontrollable giggling spells. Add to this the fact that you're looking at an engine that runs on diesel, a fact that per liter is still cheaper than gasoline.

Some will argue that beating the diesel, industrial, public utility from the 1 doesn't make it a BMW. Especially in a car as pricey and image aware as a BMW. I say are fun is that experience can be found. The 320d is one of those cars that help make diesel sexier in the Filipino morning sun, seriously.

Even if you are not a fan of the styling or the brand for that matter, the ability of this car to propel itself forward is something everyone will understand. And it is only because this car is diesel, powered, turbo common rail diesel injection and a turbo, that such performance is possible at this price point.

Performance experience

The use of the 320d package is what we've become accustomed to when it comes to a BMW. Aiding the engine in delivering a complete performance experience is the 6-speed manual transmission. The shift is a bang-on, lightest shifter and well balanced, the design delivers a drive that rewards those who drive. This is tempered by very active stability and traction assistant for the rest of the market that would like to keep their driving excitement down to a minimum.

Downsides are relatively few. Ride quality is definitely on the stiff side, owing much to the choice of run flat tires. The cabin is laser by rubber accidents in this price range but nonetheless plush despite the simplicity.

The 320d is the first 3-Series that comes to mind when attempting to rationalize paying a BMW in the own garage. Being part of the luxury line but required deliberately candidates to a more refined price.

Trouble is the higher the price of a vehicle, customer expectations often begin to hinder on the unreasonable. At this price, customers just don't get what they pay for in the BMW 320d. They get more.

The black spots of Metro Manila

BY ROAD SAFETY JARGON, A "black spot" is a road or a portion thereof where traffic accidents have frequently occurred. A black spot is more popularly known as an "accident-prone area." If you're driving in Metro Manila, you occasionally see road signs warning motorists: "Sexy dede please area, drive carefully."

In Metro Manila, where a total of 50,929 accidents took place in 2006, the top three black spots are Edsa, Commonwealth Avenue and the C-5 highway.

According to the Metro Manila Development Authority (MMDA), incidents happening on Roxas Boulevard, the other black spots are: 1) Road leading center 7th Avenue in Caloocan City; 2) C-3 Road from Monumento to Navotas; 3) E. Rodriguez Avenue corner Aguilino in Marikina City; 4) Shaw Boulevard corner Nueve de Noviembre in Mandaluyong City; 5) Buendia corner Taft Avenue in Pasay City; 6) Ortigas Avenue corner Julia Vargas Avenue in Pasig City; 7) Quezon Avenue corner Roosevelt Avenue; 8) Presidente Quirino — U.N. Avenue; 9) Taft Avenue corner Buendia; 10) Taft Avenue corner Roxas Boulevard; and 11) Santolan-Marcos Highway.

On the Road

Aida Sarville-Mendoza

Most dangerous

Among the cities and towns that comprise Metro Manila, the most dangerous for motorists or the places that had the highest volume of traffic accidents are Quezon City with 26.37 percent or 17,000 accidents in 2006, followed by Manila City with 11.51 percent or 7,298 accidents. On the other hand, the towns with the lowest number of traffic accidents are Pateros with 1,198 and Navotas with 2102 accidents.

It would be logical to assume that Pateros and Navotas have less road traffic accidents because of the relatively smaller of black spots and/or a lower traffic volume compared to Quezon City and Makati City. However the reason, something has to be done to prevent and hopefully reduce the black spots of Metro Manila. In other words, make Metro Manila's roads safe.

Experts note that has to be taken on all three components of a safe road system—the driver, the vehicle and the road. Even if a motorist driver education program were to result in safer driving habits, if the motorists and even if car manufacturers were to equip all motor vehicles with advanced safety technologies, has already been made on driver behavior and vehicle safety improvement in making roads safer is expected to deliver only the casualty reduction provided by investments in making drivers and vehicles safer.

iRAP describes safe roads as self-explaining and forgiving roads. Motorists are likely to make errors on self-explaining roads and injuries are less severe on forgiving roads.

Self-explaining roads show all road users—pedestrians and motorists—how to travel in a manner they should be and what they should do to keep safe. Clear road layouts not only explain where road users are expected to be, but also take into account the road user's ability to process information and make decisions.

Refuge

Examples: a cheap, simple pedestrian refuge island not only shows where to cross but makes safe crossing much easier. The pedestrian has no doubt only one stream of oncoming traffic at a time. The refuge island also slows down drivers and cautions overtaking at the crossing point.

Designing roads are designed to protect road users in the event of a crash. iRAP says, but engineering measures such as safety fences separate moving traffic from people on foot, bicycles and motorcycles. Impact. Note that simple, affordable infrastructures such as footpaths, paint and bridging save lives.

Here's how self-explaining and forgiving roads look like: 1) Lane markings and signs show road users how they are expected to behave; 2) Roadsides are clear of hazardous fixed objects and trees, or the road user is protected from them by a crash barrier; 3) Intersections may use crash energy absorbers or round objects with safe designs placing fences inches than round side facets at crossroads and T-intersections; 4) Traffic is calming at high speeds to separate diversions are separated. 5) Traffic is slowed down or excluded from areas where there is pedestrian activity; Paths are provided for pedestrians and bicyclists so that they can walk, cycle and ride safely. Crossing facilities show pedestrians where to cross and make it easier to cross safely.

Few

Lucky for few of Metro Manila's roads fit the above description. In any case, the black spots identified by the MMDA are typical of the typically roads posing a high risk to motorists and pedestrians alike. In road user, he must be aware.

A MIRROR, NOT A: Contrary to the Buyer's Guide quotes in the August '07 *Cl Magazine* (which this column unfortunately repeated), the 2007 Mitsubishi Eclipse has no airbags. It only has seat belts. Apologies to Mitsubishi Motors and Sales, hoping that *Cl*, the country's leading car titles, shares up the street to its Buyer's Guide.

* * *

WHAT'S BUMPER STICKER: History does not repeat itself, literature merely repeats each other.

Car cleanups and emergencies

SO YOU'VE FINALLY GOTTEN YOUR DREAM car... and you're simply many about it as most people are. How do you keep it in dream condition even as it goes down the road?

Here are some tips on car clean-ups, emergency kits and accident gadgets from the Hardware Workshop stores:

• Clean-ups. Advanced cleaning pool action can quickly and easily lift dirt and grime without leaving behind contaminants that will not only stifle the paint finish of you car but are also harmful to the environment. Pioneer and polishers contain waxes and cleaners that will leave behind a high gloss shine. Inside your car, use covers, dashboards, steering and carpet and leather cleaning products, as do wheels and tires.

• Basic tools emergency kits. Every car owner should have his or her own set of tools for fix an emergencies. What's more, a boiling tools, chance those with insulated grips (rubber or plastic covered) for extra protection. Keep your tools in a box wherever you travel, and defend off rust, dirt and especially water after using them.

• Comfort zones. Drive with ease with interior accessories that make traveling less stressful. Seat cushions for the back and neck are ideal for driving in the city and family road trips. The cushion is comfortably comfortable, allowing you to sit for long periods of time without pressure or pain.

• Mobile entertainment. Advanced audio and video mobile systems take your entertainment experience on the road to a new level. These include DVD audio/video receivers, CD players, antenna tuners, amplifiers, speakers and other products that bring the multimedia experience you desire.

Intelligenprise includes gadgets and accessories known as equalizers (allow each user to customize, while adjustable viewing angles for great video and display) and image sharpness regardless of the viewing angle. Just connect for electronic entertainment and a total visual experience.

Hardware Workshop stores are located at SM Hardware and SM Department Stores at the 4th Supermalls in North Edsa, Sta. Mesa, Manila, Quiapo, San Lazaro, Bicutan, Imus and the Mall of Asia. For the provinces, those are located at SM City Batangas, SM City Clark, SM City Dasmariñas, Lucena and Sta. Rosa.

Riding school to open. . .

From page B6

the center will be open to any individual or any group regardless of what motorcycle brand they use or have bought.

Encourage more Filipinos

With this center, the incorporators expect more Filipinos to enjoy safer bikes and road safety precautions and finally do something about the rising number of motorcycle accidents in the country.

In Metro Manila alone, motorcycle accidents average more than 80 fatalities monthly.

Schlegerly said the center will provide beginner motorcycle riders, including in how to ride, maintain and repair their bikes who use their motorcycles as a family vehicle and those more advanced riders who buy expensive models to those self to their friends since they are those who usually ride in accidents.

While he could be very much in speeding, not wearing a helmet and driving under the influence, Schlegerly said the main cause of accidents is the rising rate of drinking behavior and drunk driving as reasons is the rising rate of accidents. Riding behavioral change is more important.

The HSOC has lined up several programs including basic safety riding, riding, learners course for automobile, advanced courses for both motorcycle and cars as well as fleet safety driving programs—road safety of which can be tailor-fitted to every fleet client's requirements.

The center has yet to announce the price of each courses but promises they will be quite affordable.

No ordinary training school

But, HSOC is no ordinary training school as it will offer state-of-the-art facilities as well as road courses that will involve both motorcycle riders and car drivers.

A unique feature of the center is the "Low Friction Braking Course" where learners can acquire the correct handling of their motorcycles or cars under various slippery road conditions.

"The HSOC becomes the first in this corner Aquan to offer that facility," informed Jewel Davis, HSOC GM who is also VP for marketing of Honda Cars Philippines, Inc.

Aside from this, the HSOC will offer motorcycle rider training or other facilities such as the Figure 8, chalk, barrow plank and Emergency Lane which are all designed to help the rider's skills in balancing, cornering and braking.

"A motorcycle driver track is also included where the rider can practice his properly and safely negotiate in unpaved terrain or debris-filled roads commonly found in the Philippines," added Davis.

For car drivers

For car drivers, the school will offer courses on how to negotiate chalk, change direction, and parking, all of which will help them hone their skills to basic vehicle operations under the safest environment possible.

To prepare learners for actual road situations, traffic channels like the yellow box, round about, slopes and lane merging are likewise integrated in the center's facilities.

Both motorcycle riders and automobile drivers will have a chance to ride bikes as both will know how they should behave on the road," Davis said.

At any given time, the center could accommodate up to 75 motorcycles and 40 cars, giving the HSOC an annual rated training capacity of 13,800 riders and 8,880 drivers.

The center will employ a total of 78 HSOC instructors who will undergo a two-week training and driving experience also took a three-month additional training in Singapore.

TRANSPORT TRIVIA

By Emmar Cera

WHILE THE HUMAN BRAIN OR WHO really invented the first automobile has not been put to a close, let us take sometime all and highlight the people who made history with their own contributions to the motoring world.

Here are some of the world's famous automobile makers whom some of today's cars were named after.

Henry Ford invented a transmission mechanism and propeller shaft, the gas-powered automobile. He also improved the assembly line for automobile manufacturing. (Model T).

(1885) saw the completion of the world's first practical automobile powered by an internal combustion engine and designed by mechanical engineer Carl Benz.

In 1885, Gottlieb Daimler invented a gas engine that now... infrastructure design.

America's first gasoline-powered automobile was the 1891 Lambertcar invented by John W. Lambert.

The diesel-fueled internal combustion engine was invented by Rudolf Diesel while Charles Franklin first being invented the first automobile electrical ignition system and the first practical engine-driven generator.

- Duryea Brothers, Frank and Charles Duryea, founded America's first company to manufacture and sell gasoline-powered cars (1895).

In 1876, Nikolaus August Otto invented the gas engine.

Coty comparo fests. . .

From page B6

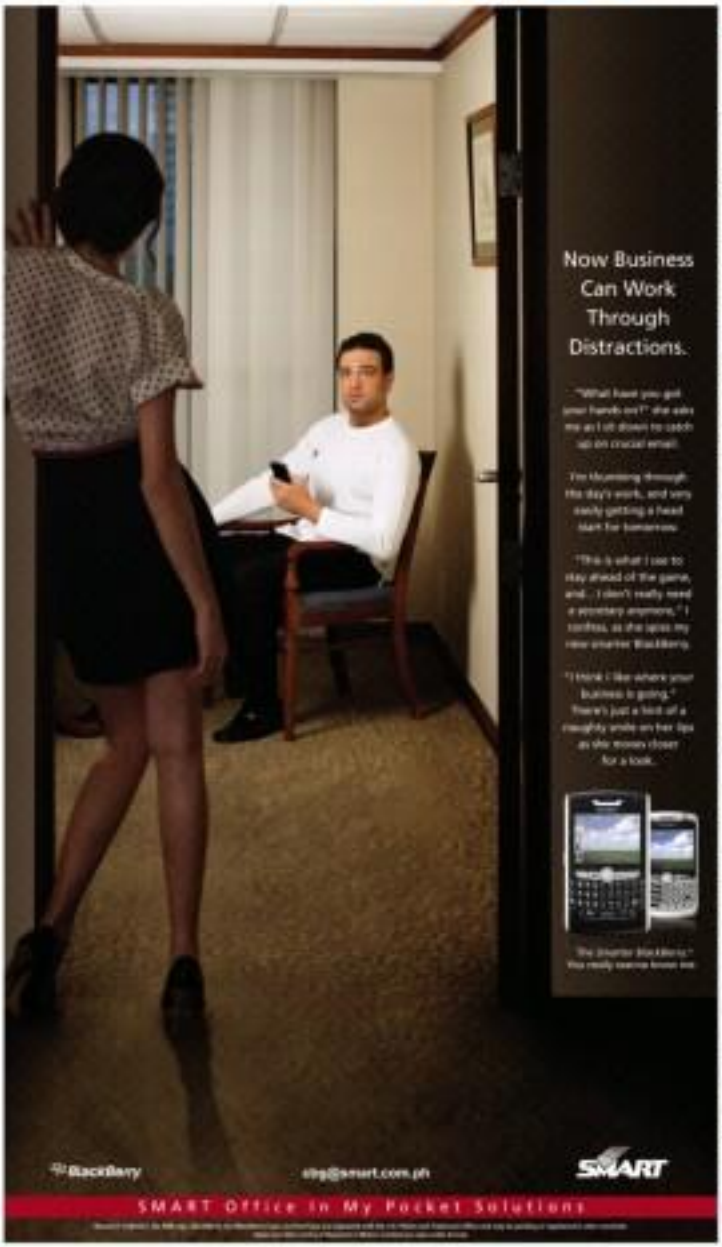
the eight-week tests at Canyon Ranch Carmona, Cavite are based on various requirements and considerations.

For budget-priced vehicles, most weight has been given to the price and the best over the performance. In the luxury-and the ultra luxury segments, weight has been given to performance, features and looks over price.

The Petron 2007 Car of the Year Philippines Awards is made possible with the help of the Automobile Association Philippines. The Manila Intercontinental Intra Ortas, Bankwell Land Corp., Bondi, Bridgestone, San Lorenzo Leisure Park, Standard Insurance and San Miguel Corp. It is also supported by the Makati Skyline, Jollibee, Magnolia Zumbi, Concept One and Speedhub.

Logistics assistance is also being provided by by the Applied Leisure and Sales Logistics Group.

BUSINESS



T-bond yield up to 8.59%

Investors still worried over US credit woes

By Michelle V. Remo

THE YIELD ON THE GOVERNMENT'S 20-year treasury bonds went up slightly yesterday, citing evidence that investors were still spooked by credit defaults in the US subprime market.

The yield on the 20-year bonds hit 8.599 percent, up 59.8 basis points from the 8 percent recorded during the last auction in December last year.

Analysts said widespread credit defaults by US borrowers with spotty credit histories had led to some risk aversion toward investments in emerging economies like the Philippines, because both sectors have the same credit rating.

Investors' fears were partly eased last week, however, when President Bush announced measures to avert a full-scale mortgage crisis.

The bureau of the Treasury's auction committee accepted P5.025 billion worth of bids, short of the government's original target of P7 billion.

Finance Undersecretary Roberto Tan said after the auction yesterday that the government did not miss the entire P7 billion because of the high bids.

Had the auction committee raised the full P7 billion, the yield on the 20-year bonds would have reached 8.71 percent.

"We don't need cash for now and so we can live with it (lower than programmed revenue raised from yesterday's auction)," Tan said.

There was considerable appetite for the 20-year bonds, with tenders reaching P13.347 billion.

Besides the volatile financial market, the higher yield on government securities was also attributed to competing investments.

The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas opened last May a facility under which rural department of banks may directly deposit funds to the BSP at yields higher than those on government securities.

This encouraged government-owned and corporations to deposit more of their funds to the central bank.

Rates on government securities, however, have been rising since the second quarter of the year after posting historic lows last year.

Atomic tax collection in the first half was also blamed for the rise in interest rates, as this raised concerns over the government's ability to reduce its budget deficit this year.

But the Department of Finance earlier reported that the government's revenue collection partially recovered in July with both the Bureau of Internal Revenue and Bureau of Customs hitting their collection targets.

The government has set a goal of trimming the deficit to P82 billion this year from last year's P64.8 billion, and balancing its budget by next year.

Having It All

Some people want to live life on their own terms, get what they want, without any hassle. And who wouldn't? Imagine a buff body without having to work out. Or wearing those sexy four-inch stilettos without pinched toes and painful feet? Life would be so much better! In fact, it would be just like Coke Light—all the great taste you love, and none of the calories you don't. You can have as much as you want without any worries!

In an alternate world where you could really have it all, there would be stolen kisses without getting slapped. You could shoot from the half-court line and not miss. Enjoy romantic movie without cheesy lines, and eat cheese popcorn without getting yellow fingers. You could enjoy the best of everything without any consequences.

Well perhaps you can't always get what you want. But you can definitely have it all with Coke Light. All pleasure, no guilt. This you can be sure of.

So grab a Coke Light now. It's the first step to having it all.

A diario novela by CARLO J. CAPARAS

To have and to hold

Art: ARNEL A. AVETRIA

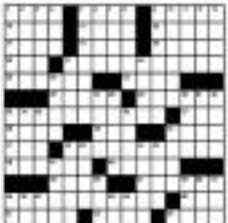
A. LIPIN — BY JOEY ABRERA

GARFIELD — BY JIM DAVIS

PILAS BAGOY — BY TEN JUNIOR

KIBO MACHINE — BY NINOY ABRERA

DAILY CROSSWORD



HOROSCOPE

ATOMIC AND WEMOY — BY LYNN GARCELLANO

CONCEPTS SU DOKU

Concepts Sudoku — by Dave Green

								7
			5	2			6	9
		3			1		8	
	5	1	7			9		
4				8		6		
	2	6	3			8		1
	9		2			4		8
		5			6	1		2
						7	3	

Difficulty Level ★★★

HOW TO PLAY SU DOKU

Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9.

Tips and programs at www.sudoku.com

Speed lady

US racing sensation Michele Bumgarner is living the dream

WHEN THE alarm clock rings, most high-school students face the same daily battle: fight through the foggiest of their fatigue, find something halfway acceptable to throw on, and prepare for another day of lectures and lab work.

However, to gorgeous 17-year-old Filipino-American Michele Bumgarner, the otherwise hated wake-up call means the ultimate chase after her dreams—literally.

After some honeymoon racing in the Philippines, Michele, who was recently appointed Ambassador of Goodwill for Subaru, Tourismo and Shiftman by the Philippine Department of Tourism, has moved to the US and set up base in the racing capital of America, North Carolina.

For Michele, the newest adventure in S&L Racing, starts new days brings another exciting opportunity to get swapped to a vehicle that most racing-mad only dream about driving. With her love and aptitude for racing combined with her determination to prove any dream is achievable, it's no wonder Michele has decided to skip her senior year of high school to chase her dream—a career in open-wheel racing.

As kids her age work to receive their diplomas during graduation, Michele has already graduated at the top of her class in the world of go-karting, winning championships throughout Asia and Europe. She's now preparing with her new team to continue her success in the US professional circuits.

Where she's not running

On the legendary tracks of the Carolinas, Michele is yet seeking all over the South of America—constantly challenging new courses and vehicles. There are not traces of leisure for Michele—she is working hard, striving to fulfill her lifelong dream. This intense driver-development program is aimed to prepare her for the all-in-one competitive circuits of US professional racing.

To help her succeed, the famed racer and 1990 winner of 24 Hours of Le Mans, Pilote Gobb, has joined Michele as mentor and trainer. With this legendary racing expert behind her and the best facilities America can offer at her service, Michele's leap to professional racing is on track to be concrete.

She earned it

Michele's arrival in the professional racing arena was never guaranteed—she worked hard to earn it. Mere decrease ing her talent at the Jim Russell International Racing Driving School in Sonoma, California, she was asked to extend her stay to compete in the minority driven chemical known as the Accelerator Program, hosted by S&L Racing with owners Lois Sievers and Stan Lewis. As an driven raced five different types of vehicles, Michele proved her aptitude for speed extended her beyond go-karts as the impressed S&L Racing and was chosen as its new driver.

With her newly earned spot on the team, Michele now has chief engineer Dan Halliday and team manager Dew Ohnesti working behind the scenes to help her focus on fully realizing her potential. Her continued success on the track has also resulted in Michele joining forces with Chicago, Illinois based Newman/Haas Racing, owned by actor Paul Newman and which boasts over 20 years of combined, top-level motorsports experience.

When Michele is not busy racing, touring or training, the Stoli likes to do what typical teenagers love: shop for new clothes, surf and chat on her personal computer, and hang out with her friends. Michele also does some commercial modeling and the occasional sound bite for companies in the Philippines and abroad.

It seems that it was as long ago since Michele raced her first go-karts in the Philippines, but in reality it has only been a short time. She has embarked on a long journey to become successful in professional open-wheel racing and she is now well on her way. As her dream transforms into reality, the driver that Ohnesta has seen before in action is also pending her in the top of professional racing as such a young age. A perfect fit for S&L Racing, Michele is certainly becoming the face of US sports-car racing. She is also a driver that while being an inspiration to the racing community, including those with whom she works and anyone else who dares to step outside the box to chase their dreams.

RACING IN RACING

A life full of surprises

ONE OF THE emerging hard-court idols of this generation is DLSU Green Archer PeeJay Barua. Curiously, Barua does not get that much playing time, but thanks to one recent shocking incident, he is now gaining popularity among UAAP fans.

Barua, whose looks are often described as a combination of actors James Blanco and Richard Gomez, was audited by a group of girls last July 26 at the South Gate of Araneta Coliseum just before the much-anticipated duel between rivals Ateneo Blue Eagles and DLSU Green Archers.

Barua was quietly observing the intricacies of UAAP coach Franz Pumaren when seven young girls "attacked" the court.

It was reported that the girls found Barua all over before Araneta security were were able to restrain the girls. Barua did not sustain any injuries except for minor scratches and a few bite marks.

Born Dec. 23, 1987, Barua hails from a small town in Guimaras Island. Both parents—Ric is the principal child of Fr Barua, a grade-school teacher, and Gerardo Barua, a seaman. He has two older siblings, Rose and Rissey, who describe the rising superstar as a shy person. The fun-loving but talented Barua never expected he would be prompted to celebrity status, certainly not through the controversial mishap.

TAKING a shot

GREEN Archer

Impressive skills

However, the Araneta incident was not the first time fans threw a surprise in Barua's path. The first came in early April 2005 when, after graduating from high school and playing for the University of Iloilo, Barua went to La Salle accompanied by a relative to inquire if he could try out for the team. Unfortunately, there was no scheduled tryout for that day. However, practice was ongoing and Coach Pumaren allowed him to join.

Pumaren was impressed with Barua's basketball skills and invited him to join several practices. He even considered letting the rookie to play with the team in Hong Kong and Korea.

Barua was then instructed to take the school's entrance examinations. After he passed, he was given a slot in the team by Pumaren.

"I got lucky," says Barua. "I was in the right place at the right time."

About the Araneta incident, he comments, "I don't know what to say. It was too sudden and I really don't know why and how it happened."

His initial stint court and the much-talked-about incident has drawn the spotlight to Barua. His career is definitely worth watching as he gains more playing time.

REFRACTING the "training"

Talented DLSU Green Archer PeeJay Barua got the shock of his life when seven young girls threw themselves at him at the Araneta Coliseum recently

ZUNIC: THE GIFT OF EFFORTLESS SLIMMING

Crash diets, pills, surgery, and injections can be safely forgotten—new slimming technologies can give you their slim, curvaceous figure you've long dreamed of without pain or a long wait.

"What we've done is to bring in the latest technology from overseas, and apply it to the problems associated with stretch and overeating," says Rosanna Sarthou, Managing Director of the state-of-the-art slimming center known as Zunic. "We help people lose weight so that they can begin exercising if they want to, whether they want to months their eating habits or diet."

Zunic's Slimming and Body Sculpting Method melts away unsightly body fat without surgery, diet, pills or exercise. Weight loss is conducted without the sweating, sweats, and pain associated with traditional methods.

A client stretches out comfortably on a couch treatment couch, and fat is literally melted away using the latest technology such as light therapy, lasers, and radio frequency to non-invasively reach under the skin and dissolve stubborn fat deposits. The results are close to instantaneous. Visible results are realized in the course of a single treatment, and can be seen in as little as 45 minutes. Up to 25 liters of fat is lost each year, all eliminated through normal body functions, with no side effects whatsoever.

To give its clients the best possible care, Zunic maintains a full complement of trained personnel. Pre-treatment medical checks are performed by fully trained Program Consultants side-by-side with licensed physicians, and all treatments are conducted by highly qualified medical staff.

Best of all, Zunic provides results with a minimum of time and effort. Zunic clients can really right out of their treatments and back into their lives without a pause!

Zunic is celebrating our 1st anniversary
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Football-playing Fil-Brit brothers Philip and James Younghusband are the new sports ambassadors of youth channel Animax

Ball brothers

By Hiko Mark M. Salazar
BLT Correspondent
Photos courtesy of Animax and Adidas

CAPTAIN Tsubasa

FOOTBALL-PLAYING FIL-Brit brothers Philip and James Younghusband have been adding feather after feather to their cap ever since they started playing with the Chelsea football club as kids.

From competing in several football matches to entering the world of local modeling (the two are the new faces of watch store Ito Cartier under the TUC Station label and sports brand Adidas, plus Phil is also the latest Hayden guy), the talented lads are continuing to step up their game.

The brothers' most recent accomplishment is being chosen as the new sports ambassadors of youth channel Animax, owned by Sony Pictures Entertainment Networks. Dynamic, adventurous and excellent at their chosen fields, the Younghusbands are the perfect spokespeople for Animax, a channel that encourages the youth to be their own special, unique selves.

They couldn't have hopped on board at a more perfect time because this September, Animax offers exciting sports events programs ranging from football to basketball and even rollerblading in the air. The coolest sports scene in fact the highlight of the channel's new shows this month.

Starting this Sept. 12 at 6 p.m. is the iconic, a fast-paced adaptation of the Dragon's manga hit that comes with lots of high flying, inline skating action. For basketball fans, there is Dear Boys, the latest coming-of-age comedy series starting on Sept. 19 at 6:30 p.m.

What the brothers are most excited about is the popular anime series Captain Tsubasa. Road to Dreams, because it's all about football.

Premiering this Sept. 21 at 5:30 p.m., the series is about Tsubasa Ozorato's quest to become a world-class footballer, leading him to Spain where he signs for Catalan giants FC Catalunya.

So Fujiwara awaits the kickoff in a crucial tie, memories of his football life years flooding back: his first meeting with his Brazilian mentor Roberto, his rivalry with ace striker Hyuga and goalkeeper Wakabayashi, and victory with the Japanese Under 16 team to the World Youth Championship.

But now, Tsubasa—as well as Hyuga and Wakabayashi—will have to face some of Europe's toughest leagues, as they hope to lead Japan to glory in the 2010 World Cup.

Flourishing career

"Like Captain Tsubasa, I am also looking forward to face the challenges that lay ahead of me as my football career in Europe continues to flourish," says the younger Phil, who at only 20 years old is Chelsea FC's most valuable striker at present. He recently signed a contract with the Scottish top league club, Aldgreg FC, going on loan in Denmark for the rest of the 2007-2008 season.

His official website, www.philyounghusband.com, is set to be launched this month or so.

"We are huge fans of Animax and when-ever we visit the Philippines, it's one of the channels we enjoy watching the most," says James, 21, a midfielder for Woking FC in England. An in-demand model, James is one of the favorites to win Candy Magazine's Guide of the Year this year.

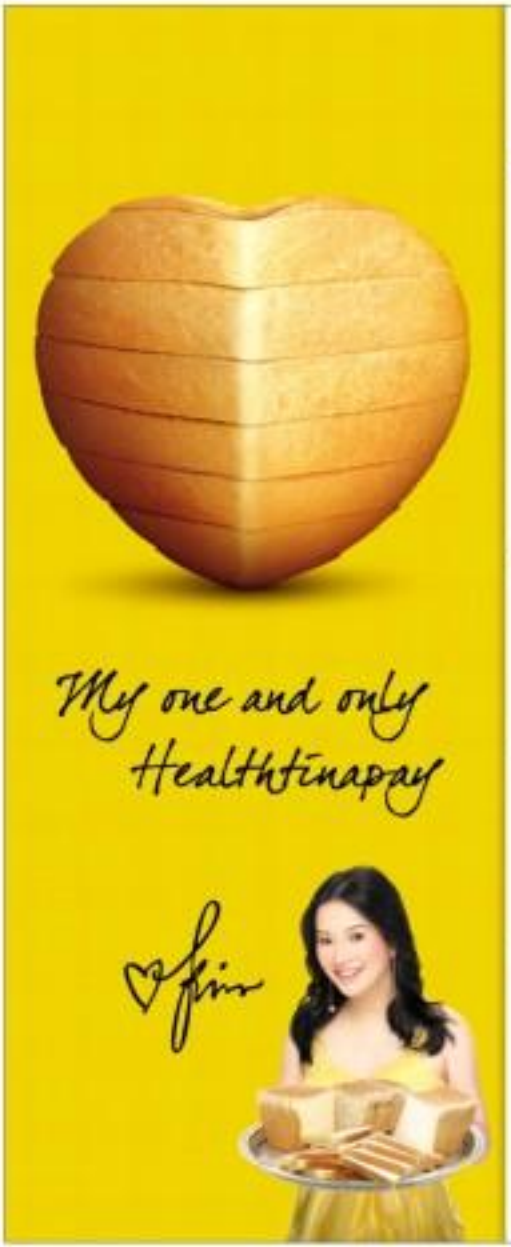
Those ball-kicking brothers are clearly into sports, and it's not just football that's on their mind. James and Phil are also excellent at tennis, basketball and swimming.

Oh, and as much as they like sweating it out in actual games, they also enjoy sitting back, relaxing and enjoying watching anything and everything about sports—sports shows, sports competitions and most especially sports-themed anime shows, exclusively on Animax.

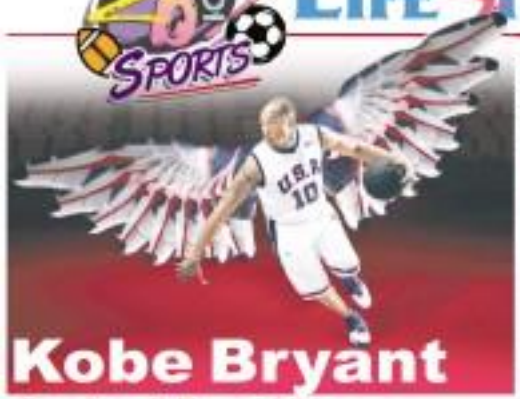
E-mail the author at hiko.mark@yahoo.com

THE YOUNGHUSBANDS

ROOKIE



2bU SPORTS LIFESTYLE



Kobe Bryant is in Manila

The basketball star is in town for a special show and to spend time with basketball-loving kids—and 2bU! Sports has tickets to give away so you can see him in action

By Pam Pasaol

PEOPLE DIDN'T seem to care that it was only 6 a.m. It didn't seem to matter either that Nike's Benilde High Street store would only open at 12 noon.

They stood in line for hours in their queue to get their hands on tickets to The Kobe Supernatural Asia Tour in Manila. In just 20 minutes, over 2,000 tickets disappeared, claimed by some of the country's biggest Kobe Bryant fans.

Today, those fans are in for a treat. Kobe will be headlining the Kobe Supernatural Manila event at the Philippine Sports Arena (formerly Ellas). He will be sharing his training regimen with young and enthusiastic Pinoy ballers. The event will start at 6 p.m.

But his visit really began earlier as Nike Dirk in The Fort where he will be meeting kids from the Elmer Kobe Charity.

"Kobe Bryant serves as a basketball icon, inspiration and role model to a lot of our young Filipino athletes and Nike Philippines is proud to bring him closer to his fans," said Melissa Cruzillo, Nike Philippines country marketing manager.

"The one-day visit is devoted as an opportunity for Kobe to reach with Filipino kids and to inspire them to work toward realizing their hoop dreams."

Nike has launched a special Kobe Tour Tee for the occasion, which was made available just a few days ago. The new version of Kobe II will also be launched during the tour. The shoes will hit the stores camouflage.

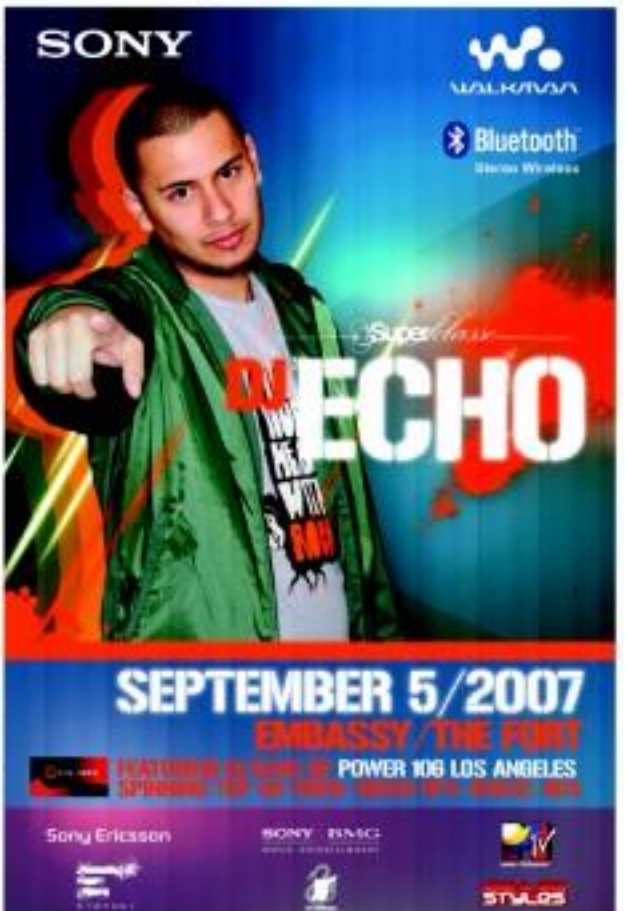
Kobe's Manila visit is part of his Supernatural Asia Tour 2007. He next stops include Tokyo, Hong Kong, Shanghai and Beijing.

EARLY BIRD: The Kobe Supernatural Asia Tour 2007

Win tickets to The Kobe Supernatural Asia Tour!

IN CASE YOU DIDN'T make it to The Fort when they gave away tickets, don't fret, because 2bU! has tickets to give away. Tell us why you're a huge Kobe fan. E-mail us at reservations@inq7.net. Don't forget to include your name, age, school/office and contact info. Deadline of entries is today at 12 noon.

SEE: All ages line up for Kobe.



Champions of CHEER

By Ruth L. Navarro

TWELVE YEARS AGO, WHEN CHEERing was a battle on the sidelines being fought by the Ateneo Blue Babble Battalion and the De La Salle Stepsquad, the UST Salinggawi Dance Troupe (SDT) bravely took the center stage and redefined the landscape of cheering forever.

One fine June UAAP cheerdance competition in 1995, every other team went for the traditional cheers and the basic lifts. SDT upped the ante by introducing complicated pyramids, harder tosses and cross dives.

They were the first to make the audience gasp with excitement and awe. Their midair cheer transitions made them stand out from the rest. The group's innovations paid off because they got the very first cheerdance title, and the next two titles after that.

After winning for three straight years, the troupe opted not to join the competition in 1998. The FEU Cheering Squad became the champion that year.

Rivalry

The year 1999 saw the beginning of a rivalry between the two squads. SDT was eager to take the title back, but they only got the second spot, while the UP Pep Squad's stellar performance earned them their first championship.

The UP Pep held on to the title for another two years, matching SDT's own record. The UP Pep also introduced a few innovations of their own in stunts and most especially in costumes.

In 2002, SDT regained the title when the group's stunts with a cheerdancing three-point difference over the UE Cheering Squad, while UP Pep did down to third.

The troupe has clearly learned lessons from their many years since this win. Now, they show no signs of giving up the trophy—not when they're so consistently for the past few years.

"We want to keep on competing until the day they take the title from us and even after that. We will get out if we lose but it's always important to fight," says SDT member Jane Lorenzo.

To date, the troupe holds the most titles in the league with a total of eight championships. They're aiming to get three more title through a six-peat win.

We don't see this as an ordeal that it's not going to be easy. It's not just the UP Pep and the FEU Cheering Squad that worry them. The two teams have been stepping at their heels the past few years.

"All teams are becoming more competitive because when we watch them on TV or when we see them on the sidelines, we sense a lot of improvement in them. We see them doing stunts they've never tried before," says SDT member Lady Dasha Ilacad.

Stood with this pressure, it's their cheerupgrader and coach Ryan Silos who reminds them not to worry about the other teams, but instead to focus on performing their own stunts well. Of such grit are champions made.

The cheerdance competition will be on Sept. 30.

THE DIZZLING gymnasts of Salinggawi Dance Troupe, introduced to the competition in 1995.

The UST Salinggawi Dance Troupe holds the most titles in the league with eight wins

U-S-T let's go fight!

SCORING for cheers!

Calling all UST Salinggawi Dance Troupe Alumni members (1967-2005). You are invited to join the 40th anniversary grand celebration on Jan. 5-16, 2006. Call 7215744/7215151 loc. 8222, 09178136186, 09178260123, 09178260830 or 09184333333.

UAAP-NCCA highs and lows

The Tigers are undisputed comeback kings, Warriors remain undefeated, while the Ateneo-La Salle and Letran-San Beda rivalries heat up and game-fixing is exposed

By Jasmine W. Payo
Inquirer Sports

SHE CAME TO ACCOMPANY her daughters.

In one corner of the Big Dome gallery she sat quietly as her hyperactive teen jumped, cheered wildly and screamed her lungs out for a glamorous varsity squad.

The 43-ish mother smiled, but clutched her bag tightly like daughter's passion, is aroused, made her nervous.

But as she looked around, her concerned paternalist nature's the only one going hoops-mad. Even grown men cheered right on the edge of mayhem.

It was the UAAP after all.

And this season, there are many reasons varsity obsessives have become both thrilling and frightening.

Young shot. By far, the Most Valuable Player of its season. Kirk Long had become the favorite son of Ateneo. Kirk Long had become the favorite son of the highlight reel. Long wasn't supposed to take the final shot. But the American guard, who had spent most of his growing-up years in the Philippines, took the ball and gave De Blue Eagles defense of win over defending champion University of Santo Tomas. With the ball in his hands in the last three seconds, the soft-spoken Long jumper and sealed it as final buzzer sounded for a 73-71 Ateneo victory.

Warriors attack. The University of the East Red Warriors have amazingly won 12 straight games. Save for a few close shaves, the Warriors easily cleaned the rest of the field. Defensive players step up every game, giving target breakdown to many additive tactician. It's a puzzling yet potent gameplan for the only unbeaten collegiate squad.

Comeback kings. In a miraculous season, the University of Santo Tomas Growling Tigers rose from 12 points down with less than two minutes to go, and the Tigers maintained the campaign in overtime to stun the La Salle Green Archers, 81-75. With the Archers' ace characteristic meltdown, the Tigers also ended their seven-season losing streak against the archers, but really the victory was no surprise for the team that no one thought would win the championship last season.

Renewed feud. The country's fiercest rivalry turned more vicious this season. The on court battle didn't end when the Ateneo Blue Eagles outhasted the La Salle Green Archers, 80-77, in overtime last July 26. La Salle put the game under protest, saying that Ateneo violated a league rule when it fielded foreign players Rich Long and Tim Lattrell at the same time. A heated week followed as the two camps traded barbs before league officials junked La Salle's protest due to lack of merit. The Archers grudgingly accepted the decision, but vowed to settle the score in another anticipated blockbuster showdown against the Eagles this Sunday.

Court is court. Action has also turned fiery even as the NCAA rebrands the Juan Sports Hall Lions dragged the games from the hard court to the mat room. Just a couple of weeks ago, San Beda announced a precautionary measure ruling order (TRO) following a decision by league officials to suspend Lions star Yousif Aljamal for joining the PBA draft without officially informing the NCAA. The powerhouse squad later filed a 20-day TRO extension, but San Beda and league officials eventually reached an amicable settlement. The Lions dropped the TRO and offered to sit out Aljamal in the next two games.

Comeback clash. Two coaches nearly got into a fistfight after a crapped match between the San Beda Red Lions and the Jose Rizal University Bombers. Lyceum mentor Frankie Lim lashed out at the Bombers' rough play and nearly crashed Lions coach JBL coach Ariel Vanguardia at the end of the game. Coolers heads intervened, but that didn't prevent them from exchanging harsh words.

Free-for-all. And the Lions remained at the center of the storm in another fight-marred match against rival Letran Knights. San Beda recently avenged its first-round loss to Letran in another tight contest, but the intense match spilled over the gallery in a melee between members of the Lions and Knights cheering squads. Order was restored after a few fist-scuffle and finger-pulling.

Million-dollar game. But perhaps no collegiate controversy was sunnier than the National Bureau of Investigation arrested a league standout for game-fixing. Paulo Orbeta, the top point guard of the College of St. Benilde Blazers, got caught in an entrapment operation along with three other suspects last month. In the investigation, the league learned of syndicates that gambled on game results by placing bets worth millions of pesos! The NCAA maintained that there are isolated cases. But the issue has only underscored how irrationally important....not only for fans....collegiate hoops had turned out.

AFTERMATH: Eric Salamat drives against Ateneo's Leo Canuto.

RABBIT-like thumbprint of Ateneo's triple-crowned by James Mangahas, TY Tang and Rico Maierhofer of De La Salle.

ARSHMOUNT: Dante and Harvey Pascua of St. Benilde with Rafael Javal of Letran.

TOUGH! Aljamal of San Beda gets the rebound off Marvin Hayes of JRU.

Seeing yellow

By Patrick Leonard M. Maye
DLSU Contributor

The UST Yellow Jackets can be counted on to rally the entire Thomasian community behind the Salinggawi Dance Troupe and the Growling Tigers

THE DOMINANCE OF THE University of Santo Tomas fading quest, Dance Troupe (UDT) in the UAAP Cheerdance battles has been synonymous to the group's impeccable moves, daring stunts and seamless execution of its routines.

But there is one more vital ingredient in the success of the multi-titled squad. The UST Yellow Jackets.

Taking the name of a breed of wasps from North America known for their yellow and black colors, deadly sting and the buzzing sound they create, the UST Yellow Jackets bring into the University athletic Association of the Philippines (UAAP) the intensity and polarizing drama beats that inject extra energy to UST's moves.

"Though these wasps are small, they still make loud noises," says Yellow Jackets president John Eros Beniamin Regala.

The group started as the UST Rangers in the mid-'90s, and were later recognized by the university as the Yellow Jackets in 2001.

"We complement them (UDT). They can depend on their core because of their dancing and acrobatic skills, but their performances may still seem incomplete if they don't get a dose of our drum beats," adds Regala.

KEEPING up with the best

A month before the annual cheering competitions, Regala says UDT choreographer Ignos Isles gives them the final music sequence for their performances.

"They leave it to us how we put the beats to their performances. We practice together two weeks before competitions."

The Yellow Jackets are also behind the catchy tunes of "On Point," "D' Defense" and many others.

"We challenge ourselves to come up with something original all the time," says Regala.

The group takes much pride in its (original) drum beats, crediting Isles's travel to an online forum that fan-boys was chirping the "Antoo" chant on Outer, they hooked into the chant. When they found out that the chant had beats, the Yellow Jackets immediately took it off its list of chants.

Besides playing a crucial role in encouraging the crowd through their drum beats and chants, especially when the UST Growling Tigers are trailing in crunch time, the group also tries to control the crowd from becoming rowdy.

No disrespect

During the half time of the first meeting between UST and Ateneo, the Blue Babble Barcelona inadvertently performed over the five minutes time limit allowed for each squad. The Yellow Jackets drew seemingly interrupted the Lions's performances during its final minutes, which enraged the Ateneo crowd.

"We did not mean to disrespect anyone. We just saw that a group of people were booing and jeering at UST's board member professor Benedict Hermenio when he passed by them. We don't want that to be a cause of riots like the one we recently saw in NCAA (National College Athletic Association), so we felt the need to avoid the jeers of the crowd other several to refer to her distress by cheering," explains Regala.

"It's nothing personal, we understand them. They're like us. It's a matter of school pride for them as we don't take it personally."

Truly, the UST Yellow Jackets can be counted on to rally the entire Thomasian community behind the elite defense of both the Salinggawi Dance Troupe and the Growling Tigers.

HEALTHY and ACTIVE LIFESTYLE
Information for Living Right

Question

I read that you need to drink eight glasses of water every day, do soft drinks also help keep your body hydrated?

Answer

Yes, carbonated soft drinks can help quench your thirst and provide your body with its daily liquid for proper hydration. Hydration is critical in helping to maintain normal body temperature and for every physiological function and action by your body and brain. People can also get liquids from juice, milk, coffee, tea, fruits, vegetables and other foods and beverages. Even beverages with caffeine, like coffee and cola drinks, can help keep you hydrated. Besides basic hydration, carbonated soft drinks can also provide carbohydrate fuel that supplies energy necessary for daily activities. For most people, about 80 percent of total liquids each day come from drinking water and beverages; the other 20 percent of liquids come from food.

An extensive review by the National Academy of Science's Institute of Medicine determined that all beverages and foods can help keep you hydrated. It found that most people can meet their daily fluid needs through normal drinking habits or beverages at meals, snacks and in other social situations and by drinking when they are thirsty. People who are physically active or who live in hot climates may need to consume more fluids.

Sources:

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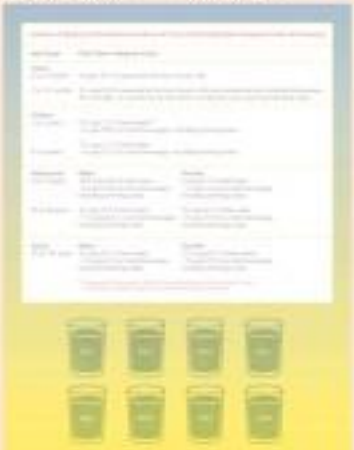

Peek's World

Tales of a Balanced, Healthy and Active Lifestyle

A guaranteed hydrator

Another BIG value in hydration. Unfortunately, not many people know about it. Surprised? Well, it's true that it's very important to keeping your body hydrated especially in the summer. Dehydration's very big problem," agreed Ali. "Your muscles need to stay hydrated. You need it in order to function there. In order for you to perform at your level you need to drink, I love it. Gatorade myself. It provides to potassium, provides muscle pulls. It creates a natural form of hydration for your joints. Because of what we do, we require a lot of fluids in our bodies, whether it's Powerade or water."

According to the Sportsmed Institute for Health and Wellness, a 180-lb athlete, living hydrated can cause shortness and impaired stamina, not function. In 20 minutes or more, 1-1.5 cups of total fluids each day depending on your age, weight, gender, the schedule and your level of physical activity. Total fluids means that you don't just drink water but everything in your diet, as it does your body throughout water. "Water is the best way to hydrate. Beverages like soft drinks and sometimes is healthier yourself. Foods that contain water like fruits, vegetables and soups can also contribute to your hydration requirement.

Come rain, come all

All is proceeding according to plan today, Ali, today. As he said, "I think you've already got your getting healthy. It's supposed to be fun too. Look at Ivan Olmedo. If you see him, that weak orthopedic shoe or anything he still he runs on. He's fast at first and it's about time when you body is used to certain things. So just stand and train your way up from there. Remember that it's a lifestyle and it's supposed to be a fun thing, so you enjoy a discipline or a diet."

For more information about beverages and your health, visit the ILSI SEA website at www.ilsi-sea.org/beverages.htm or, Live a balanced, healthy and active lifestyle today!

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Radio stars

Text by Bianca Consunji
2007 Correspondent
Photos by Ricky Calderon

MOST VARSITY TEAMS ARE dependent on alumni donations and the occasional corporate sponsorship. While this is not necessarily a bad way to look for funds for sports teams, there's always the fear of having to rearrange around for money once the varsity year ends.

Paired with this dilemma, Mico Halili, team manager of the Blue Eagles (Ateneo's high school basketball team), decided to do something novel.

"Halikinu Radio was created in 2004," Halili says. "It was primarily designed to raise a substantial amount of funds for several varsity teams in the Ateneo. As opposed to the tradition of exclusively sponsoring prominent alumni for donations, we believed in starting a sustainable media project that would raise funds through corporate sponsorships built on legitimate media values."

Halikinu Radio, a combination rock-music and sports initiative that aims to showcase the different talents of Ateneo de Manila University students, is a program that features major concert events as well as daily segments on radio station 90.7/107.

"Musicians, athletes, graphic artists and event organizers are tapped for our events and programs," Halili says. "But what makes us special is that our audience is interactive, as we appeal to simply targeting the Ateneo students."

"Halikinu Radio is now an emerging brand when it comes to radio production, concert-event management and campus marketing."

Halikinu's events include the Big Blue Eagle chow rally (held yearly to drum up support for the athletes), as well as a concert series and a radio festival where popular bands such as Sponge Cola, Kjwest, Kapatid, Dicta Licious, Chicser, and Chonbal, among others, play for the benefit of the Blue Eagles.

The NU DT organizers, on the other hand, feature indie college bands from the Metro and live sports updates about the school teams.

Tina Campolo, Christel Bonnar, Kara Mendoza, Jill 105.9's official student correspondents, television coaches and players and clothier program, fashions, and post-game radio reports from the game venues live on NU DT during weekends.

"The strength of Halikinu Radio is its ability to help different members of the Ateneo community all at the same time," says Halili. "By producing radio segments and staging events with student organizations in the Ateneo, Halikinu Radio is able to raise funds that assist the Ateneo UAAP Juniors basketball teams."

TINA Campolo, Kara Mendoza and Christel Bonnar

Halikinu Radio is a combination rock-music and sports initiative that aims to showcase the different talents of Ateneo de Manila University students

"It's a more unorthodox approach to raising and managing funds," he says. "We intend to keep up a year-long campaign which involves more events and perhaps get media coverage for other Ateneo varsity teams, like men's and women's basketball."

E-mail the author at bianca.consunji@yahoo.com

Meet the Halikinu radio girls

Kara Monica L. Mendoza, 20
2nd year, AB Communication

What made you try out for the Halikinu radio, and what do you do for the program?

It combines three of my passions: talking and hosting, radio and basketball.

Radio: Chonbal and I are both junior jocks of Magic 89.9's live wire hosts' radio background. I guess that being in the radio more than my iPod!

Basketball: Aside from the fact that I've always been a fanatic of the Halikinu radio talk show, I've been watching the Blue Eagles since I was in high school (with my Ateneo dad, cousins and uncles). I've been supporting the team even before I became Ateneo material! Plus some of the players are my friends, too.

Are you into basketball yourself, or any other sports?

No, I'm far from athletic! I can't play to save my life! But I wish I could!

What else do you do or use your free time?

I'm an officer (batch representative) of the Ateneo Association of Communication majors, so I'm normally busy with projects and events. To de-stress, I go to the gym, the bookstore or the spa.

What are your best and worst experiences with the program?

One of the best perks for working for Halikinu Radio is the free love! Nike has sponsored us and gives us so much clothes! But the best part for me is the media pass! We don't have to worry about seats or hold-out tickets! We sit right in the middle of all the action.

Christina Michaela Salmon Campolo, 20
4th year, AB Communication

What made you try out for the Halikinu radio, and what do you do for the program?

I've done films, plays and hosting in the past, but I've never tried doing radio. It seemed like the perfect opportunity for me to learn something new and support my school at the same time. We basically report for all the games of the Ateneo Blue Eagles in the UAAP. Since there are three of us, we divide the work. One will report, another will write, and one will be the PR girl (she usually gets the interviews), contacts the radio station and interviews them if we're about to call. Or, We may have our own individual works to do during the games, but we still help each other out as much as we can. If we can help out with writing, getting the stats of the game or probably interview a celebrity, then we do so.

Are you into basketball yourself, or any other sports?

Yes, I am into basketball, but that's up to me watching the UAAP, supporting my school and getting to know the players. I'm not so much into the stats or any of the technical stuff... But I try to understand as much as I can whenever I watch the games. Research, obviously, (watching, playing soccer and I am currently part of a flag football team.

What else do you do or use your free time?

I try to enjoy my free time with my family, friends and boyfriend to get rid of homework and related. During most weeks in school, We go out, have lunch or dinner, watch a movie, then maybe have some drinks or go to school events. Of course, I have to allot some time for homework and perhaps do some activities for my org as well.

What are your best and worst experiences with the program?

So far, I've really enjoyed working for Halikinu Radio. It's so much fun watching the games live without having to compete for tickets, and getting to know the players up close. It's great how I can support my school in this way. The semi-celebrity status is also a huge perk, with all the freebies, meeting celebrities and getting the chance to experience the media's over-hyped spotlight. Of course, it's not considering I'm a communications major and I learn about this in school. It's funny though, because sometimes I cringe or am amazed with the way I sound on the radio because I'm doing everything for the first time. As for worst experiences, I wouldn't really say there are any. Of course, during reports, there are times when I make mistakes or get confused with what I'm supposed to say. It's also nerve-wracking whenever we're pressed for time and we need to get a report done. Sometimes we don't get to coordinate with the radio station and the report gets canceled but, aside from those small problems, we totally enjoy ourselves and make the most out of it.

Christel Marie D. Bonnar, 19
4th year, AB Communication

What made you try out for the Halikinu radio, and what do you do for the program?

I've been doing radio for a while (a little over a year) under the Junior Jock program of Magic 89.9 so I figured it would be a challenge and a change if I did sports casting, hoping to eventually do TV hosting or something of that sort. For Halikinu radio, we cover the UAAP games of Ateneo. We do the work by rotation (reporter, writer and logistics)—the one who interviews the players, coaches or celebrities who are watching the games, getting stats, scores (in the OA or break if, etc.).

Are you into basketball yourself, or any other sports?

I am a basketball fan but not a fanatic. I'd like to say I am a fan of the players, that's for sure. Being American, I am a fan of the sports (play (i.e. volleyball and flag football).

What else do you do or use your free time?

During my free time (which I almost always never have), I like to watch movies, hang out with my friends, shop, play flag football (we have an ongoing league), read, listen to music, look at clothes and consider a career, etc. I also like brainstorming for creative ideas for an events group I work with: Lady Stylos.

What are your best and worst experiences with the program?

The best experiences I've had with the program are getting countryside view of the games and never having to worry about how and where to get tickets (because of our "golden" ID), getting to talk to the players, coaches or any other celebrity personality we spot, and of course just reporting in school for us already.

There hasn't been any real bad experiences except that sometimes, when we get excited, we get jittery when our report hot. But doesn't happen very often as its all good. Other than that, it definitely makes our weekends more exciting.

ROOTING for Miriam College

Pooches at play

Text by Bianca Consunji
2007 Correspondent
Photos by Ryan Fernandez

FOR LESLIE AÑO, Karen Arenas and Jo-an Bungay, making jerseys for dogs was a simple matter of combining their interests. They had all been roommates on Miriam College's varsity basketball team, and all had dogs of their own, which they loved dressing in all sorts of outfits.

However, the group wasn't too happy with the outfits available to dog specialty stores. Finding them overly frilly and roomy, the students headed decided to create out with their own line of clothing for dogs that followed their own specifications.

Año, Arenas and Bungay then decided to partner with college friend Gyle Serrano and came up with Pakpups, a line of clothing devoted to dogs, aside from the typical frilly outfits that are usually associated with small toy dogs, the group produced a line of jerseys suitable for more active dogs and their owners.

"We didn't like the designs we saw in the stores," Año said. "So we decided to produce our own stuff...and jerseys seem a natural choice since we had all played basketball together."

As of now, they don't have all the UAAP school jerseys. Admitting to a personal bias, the group has jerseys in the school colors of alma mater Miriam College, and of University of the Philippines, Ateneo de Manila University, De La Salle University, and UAAP and some US basketball teams. However, they are running on such many designs in the near future. Pakpups is also revising our catch statements shirts and modeling shirts for the dog and owner.

Talk about sharing the school spirit—now, even your dog can wear his your team of choice. Plus, you don't have to dress your tough-looking bulldog in a ruffled dress anymore.

Contact Pakpups at fab.pups@yahoo.com, http://fab-pups.multiply.com, *or* (0916) 2832380 *or* (0916) 2702861.

E-mail the author at bianca.consunji@yahoo.com

Visit the photographer at http://thenewandpuppy.multiply.com

RESPLENDENT in red

FAMOUS Ateneo-La Salle rivalry extends to the pets.

UNIVERSITY of the Philippines supporter

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ENTERTAINMENT

Editor Bonnie G. Velarde

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'Shaider' times 3

Dennis, Marky and Aljur top-bill GMA 7's 'Zaido'

By Bayani San Diego Jr.

GMA 7 HAS FOUND three new super heroes in Dennis Trillo, Marky Cielo and Aljur Abrenica, who are donning the sleek spandex costumes of Zaido—the Pinoy Shaider.

The new prime time series "Zaido" is based on the Japanese live-action series "Shaider," which ran from 1984 to '85.

"Shaider" is part of the "Metal Heroes" genre. Dennis is the Blue Zaido; Marky Cielo, the Green Zaido; and Aljur, the Red Zaido.

Other cast members are Lorna Tolentino, Tirso Cruz III, Raymart Santiago, Jay Manalo, Ian de Leon, Diana Zubiri, Lovi, and Rich Bristol as Aziz.

Dennis and Lovi are [illegible] partners on the show.

When Inquirer Entertainment caught up with Dennis, he had been taping "Zaido" and the all-season soap "Sang Maharot Han ang Ulap" back-to-back for five days straight.

NEW TV heroes (from left) Marky Cielo, Dennis Trillo at Aljur Abrenica get ready for promo snaps

After a short nap, Dennis was again on the road.

"I'm on my way to Laguna, to shoot a patay (criminal) scene for 'Zaido,'" he related. "We haven't done major fight scenes yet. But we've been training regularly."

Aljur has been going to the gym at least once a week, "Dennis said.

Aljur added: "The three of us had the chance to bond during our martial arts and swordplay training."

It was Marky's first motorbike ride. "I

SHADER, E2

ABC 5: 'RP Idol is ours'

By Bayani San Diego Jr.

Bobby Barreiro insists his network will continue producing the reality talent search

REACTING TO THE INQUIRER EXTRA interviewed story "GMA 7 eyes 'RP Idol,'" ABC 5 managing director Bobby Barreiro asserted that his network is renewing Season 2 of "Philippine Idol," "barring any major glitch."

Barreiro confirmed that ABC 5 is still deep into negotiations on the deal with "Idol" franchise holder FremantleMedia, but added that there is no indication that the show would be given to another network.

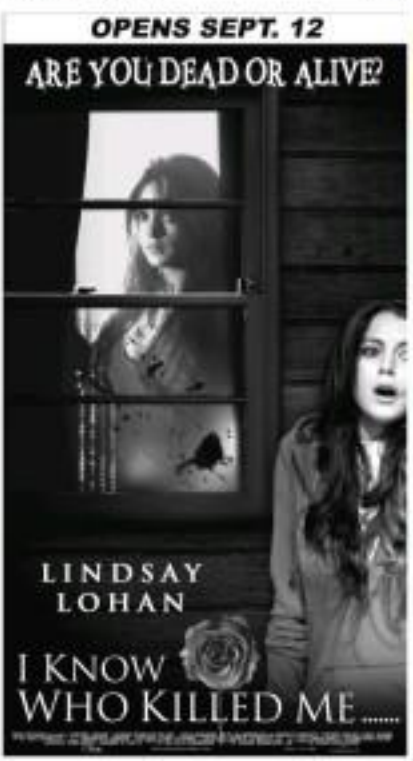
"Fremantle people are very professional. They're living with players. They won't burn bridges just because there's a better offer from another network," Barreiro said in [illegible] Entertainment in a phone interview on Monday.

He said that the final decision rests on ABC 5 president and chief executive officer Stanley Ocampo and Fremantle.

"Mr. Ocampo is just waiting for the terms of the contract to be finalized. He's very interested in the show," Barreiro declared. "For as long as the terms are reasonable, we'll push through with it."

Barreiro expressed surprise though that GMA 7 is now eyeing the RP "Idol" franchise. "Perhaps this proves that franchises work and is changing the local TV landscape. There is nothing bad with foreign formats. It's just a matter of infusing it with local flavor. Franchises allow us to learn from the best practitioners in the world."

ABC 5, E2



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1 THE INVASION - THX	6 NANCY DREW
2 DISTURBIA	7 THE BOURNE ULTIMATUM RUSH HOUR 3
3 [illegible]	8 1408
4 DAYWATCH	9 A LOVE STORY
5 SKINWALKERS	10 CHOPSUEY

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3 DISTURBIA	6 DAY WATCH
4 1408	7 THE INVASION CHOPSUEY

METRO EAST

1 EVAN ALMIGHTY	5 RUSH HOUR 3
2 DISTURBIA	6 THE INVASION CHOPSUEY
3 SKINWALKERS	7 1408
4 NANCY DREW	8 A LOVE STORY

NOVALICHES

1 DISTURBIA	3 A LOVE STORY
2 NANCY DREW	4 CHOPSUEY

PIONEER

1 NANCY DREW	3 SKINWALKERS
2 DAY WATCH	4 DISTURBIA

STA. ROSA

1 1408	
2 CASA	
3 THREE	
4 RUSH HOUR 3	

LIPA

1 RISE	
2 RUSH HOUR 3	
3 A LOVE STORY	
4 EVAN ALMIGHTY	

DASMARINAS

1 THE INVASION	
2 BLIND DATING	
3 THREE	
4 THE CONDEMNED	

IMUS

1 DISTURBIA	
2 A LOVE STORY	
3 MY KUYA'S WEDDING	
4 THREE	

ANGELES

1 RISE	
2 SINKING of JAPAN	
3 CASA	
4 THE INVASION	

TARLAC

1 A LOVE STORY	
2 LICENSE to WED	
3 EVAN ALMIGHTY	

STARMILLS

1 RISE	4 MY KUYA'S WEDDING
2 SINKING of JAPAN	5 1408
3 A LOVE STORY	6 RUSH HOUR 3

BACOLOD

1 RISE	1 EVAN ALMIGHTY
2 BLIND DATING	2 THE INVASION
3 A LOVE STORY	3 MY KUYA'S WEDDING
4 THREE	4 A LOVE STORY
5 BORDERTOWN	5 HAIRSPRAY
6 CASA	6 CASA

ILOILO

1 EVAN ALMIGHTY	
2 THE INVASION	
3 MY KUYA'S WEDDING	
4 A LOVE STORY	
5 HAIRSPRAY	
6 CASA	

ABC 5 . . . From page 6

He revealed out that ABC 5 is gearing up for "Asian Idol," remarked as a "big launch" for IP "Idol" Season 2.

Local champ Mau Marcelo is the country's representative at the Asian showdown in Atlanta, Georgia in November.

"Seven Asian countries have Idol franchises—Indonesia, India, Kazakhstan, Singapore, Malaysia, Vietnam and the Philippines. RTTI [channel] in Indonesia is hosting the regional competition. Francis Jr is coordinating with the different countries," Boerder said.

'Shaider' times 3

Turn to page E7

was addicting," he said. "On my last spin, through, I left!"

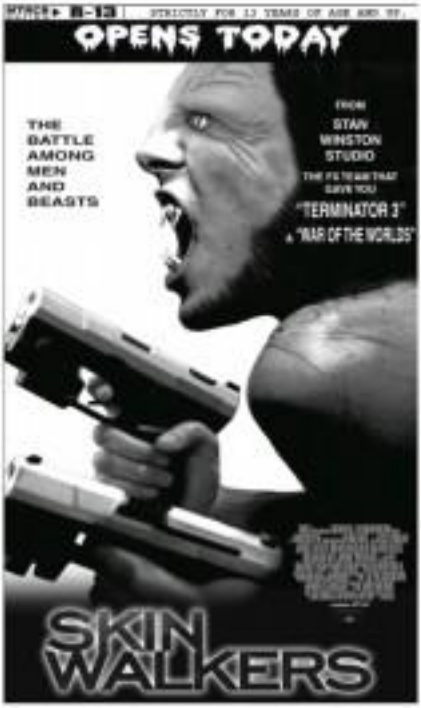
Dennis is excited that he gets to use a laser sword and gun, and the acrobatic stunts on a harness.

The award-winning actor was so sold on his old "Shaider" when it first aired on IBC-13.

"I really enjoyed the stunts," he recalled. "And the story was ahead of its time. I was amazed by the gigantic robots fighting with the monsters."

For the Pinoy version, Dennis said the network's production team had "redesigned and modernized" the Shaider saga.

"We want viewers to find it exciting and unpredictable," he said.



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Rock stars recall Summer of Love '67

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THEATRE MALL
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2 1408 & THE INVASION PG13
3 DAY WATCH
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5 NANCY DREW
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SAN FRANCISCO—SOME OF the biggest musical stars of the 1960s unsentimentalize gathered here on Sunday for a concert to celebrate the 40th anniversary of the Summer of Love, yet backstage many voiced disappointment about the event's unfulfilled ideals.

The Summer of Love of 1967 made San Francisco a magnet for youth who wanted to experiment with sex, drugs, rock and roll and the hippie lifestyle.

"We thought, this is it, we're going to change the world, actually we're going to become the Christmas world of love," Ray Manzarek, 68, keyboardist for The Doors, told listeners. "Of course, it didn't happen."

The January 1967 "Human Be-In" was credited with drawing young people to the city.

The '60s lived again as Manzarek, Jefferson Starship and other legends performed. Thousands of fans donned tie-dye

OPENS SEPTEMBER 12
R-13
HOW MANY WRONGS TO MAKE IT RIGHT?
JODIE FOSTER
THE BRAVE ONE

AT THE CINEMAS

GLORIETTA 1	1 CHOPSUEY	2 DISTURBIA	3 NANCY DREW	4 A LOVE STORY
GLORIETTA 4	1 DAYWATCH	2 SHANGHAI KISS	3? DISTURBIA	
GREENBELT 1	4 ARE WE ALONE YET?	5 THE INVASION	6 NANCY DREW	7 1408
GREENBELT 2	1 DAYWATCH	2 NANCY DREW		
	1? NANCY DREW	2? DISTURBIA		
ALABANG TOWN CENTER	1 SHOOTOUT	2 SHANGHAI KISS	3 DAYWATCH	4 THE INVASION
	1? DISTURBIA	2 NANCY DREW		
	3 DAYWATCH	4 THE INVASION	5 SHANGHAI KISS	
AYALA CENTER CEBU	1 EVAN ALMIGHTY	2 PLANET TERROR	3 1408	4 THE INVASION
MARKET! MARKET!	1 SHOOTOUT	2 SHANGHAI KISS		
	3 NANCY DREW	4 DISTURBIA	5 DAYWATCH	
TRINOMA	1 EVAN ALMIGHTY	2 SHANGHAI KISS	3 DAYWATCH	4 NANCY DREW
	5 CHOPSUEY	6 1408	7? DISTURBIA	

AT THE MALLS

Ayala Malls

- Glorietta — Philippine Baby Apparel's Just Five, September 3 to 9, 2007 at the Activity Center
- Greenbelt — Sounds of Greenbelt featuring Moonbeats, September 8, 2007 at the Greenbelt 4 Park
- Alabang Town Center — Aksyon Exhibit, September 1 to 16, 2007 at the Activity Center
- Ayala Center Cebu — Silver Teens of American Idol Live!, September 29, 6 PM, Onstage (Cinema 1)
- Market! Market! — Lechon Mall Show, September 6 & 7, 2007 at the Activity Center
- Christian's — Regatory Philippines presents Disney's UNDERWEAR, A Solo at SM's Aloha Theater - Opens August 31, 2007. For inquiries, pls. call 687-0743
- Ayala Museum — Antipodes: Homage to my Ancestors, August 28 to September 16, 2007. For more info, pls. call 757-7117 or 0917-xxx-xxxx, visit www.ayalamuseum.org
- Tsi Nama — Samsung Exhibit: An exhibit of the latest Samsung mobile phones, September 10 to 16, 10am to 9 pm, Walkways 1 Food Choices Level 2

TAG: THE INTERNATIONAL VILLAGE FILM FESTIVAL
The Sixth Sense
Bruce Willis
Haley Joel Osment
Toni Collette
Shangri-La Plaza

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glorietta GREENBELT ALABANG TOWN CENTER AYALA CENTER CEBU Tsi Nama

A LARGE crowd dances to the music during the "Summer of Love" 40th anniversary concert at Golden Gate Park in San Francisco, California on Sept. 3.

Rock stars recall ...

From page D1

drinks and bell bottoms pants and the smell of marijuana wafted through the air.

Two women twirled through the crowd in Golden Gate Park offering free hugs.

In keeping with the spirit of those times, the concert was free.

Betrayed

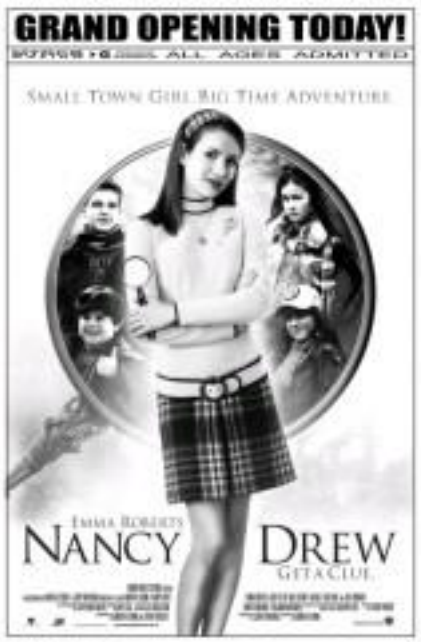
In the '60s, many in the counterculture felt they could change the world by removing societal restrictions and ending the Vietnam War.

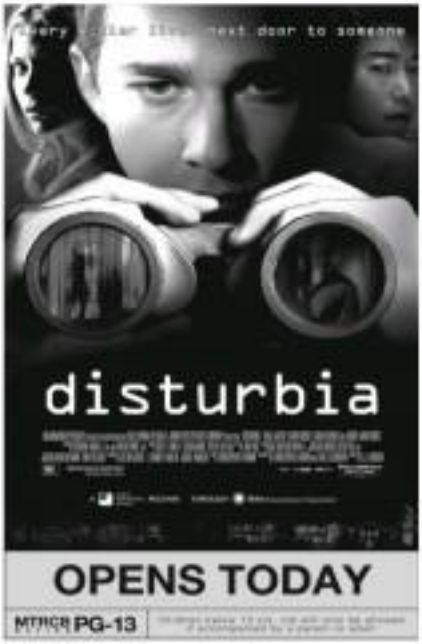
Pete De La Parra, drummer for the band Canned Heat, said his generation never lived up to its ideals.

"It's the ideals, I feel betrayed," he said backstage after playing before what organizers estimated was 80,000 fans.

Of note

James Darby, 67, played with Big Brother and the Holding Company, whose lead singer Janis Joplin died of a drug overdose. "My atmosphere is in myself," he said. "My environment were different; I mix-mastered human nature." Reuters





ENTERTAINMENT

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Careful what you say when the mic's on–always

By the Inquirer Inquisitor, Entertainment Staff

QUIA I'M "HOMEBOUND" AGAIN (A SEQUEL) Here on a "whirlwind tour" with the actress that customarily is preceding or at least here. The heartthrob reportedly rom-plained to a friend of his tormy rebuffals, using language that would make chief cook sec Marimar Gagamba blush. Unknown to the guy his lipid rate was up!

ALJUR Abrenica and Kris Bernal

Another feud-sneath

This other heartthrob is now rumbly. Bothered token, he subdued bad-mouthing the director who, during one night break, let lapel rate on, fire, and everything else in the OB van, including the director, breast-every tuesday-denial. Heeh. Confronted the erring actor, who ended up jobless, of course and, not surprisingly, banned for life from the director's projects.

THAT'S Bret's hand on Angelina's back, at the Venice Film Festival. AFP/PHOTO

Two-second delay

This actress has always been rumored as a bit, uh, dense. Confirmatorily, during a taped TV interview left and right, in spite of her blank stares, Someone's noticed that she's a bit slow in fielding questions.... "As if her brain is outside two-second delay."

Consume two

Bill Bennett was being groomed as the lalove mom of fellow talent-search champ Mart Escudero. Now that Mart is being linked with co-star Jessica Garcia (more popularly known as Jessa Garcia's sister, daughter, Mart has found a new partner in another "Starstruck" blitz—Aljur Abrenica.

Bet and Aljur were spotted being rather affectionate with each other on the "Eat Bulaga" set. Check out the camps.

Papa Pit

SPACE, Italy—Brad Pitt says Italian women are his favorite. Better, Angelina! And, don't drive, cause, to listen to pronunciation-wise this about Princess actress Anne Jones, which is competing at the Lugano city's film festival for the Golden Lion award. They have one child of their own, and three that [sic] adopted transnationally. Asked by Italian state TV if their sons study for a BDA child, Pitt replied quickly, "Yeah, we're ready. [Shiloh] is the more fun I've ever had and also the biggest pain in the ass." AP

Guns: Boycott Olympics

SIDS VOSS—Richard Gere is pursuing his a boycott of the 2008 Beijing Olympics. Gere, 58, chair of the International Campaign for Tibet, told Reuters: "A general boycott is not certainly for today; it's probably temporal, but maybe early absolutely makes sense. Why should the world censure people who are obviously so bad to their own people, as bad to other people?"

RUSHES

LOPAN Taiwan tour: His score was well.

Cover up, girl

HUMA GUMPEN—Boyzone is due to play to Muslim-majority Malaysia this November, but will insist on more demure live outfits! Boasting tops and thighs-skimming shirts, the Sex Bomb Tunes aren't quite appealing. AFP

Breakdown: Lee

HONG KONG—Oscar-winning director Ang Lee says filming the sex scenes in his new spy thriller "Lust, Caution" actually caused him a mental breakdown. Lee was late quoted by the Apple Daily newspaper as saying the explicit scenes drove effed-looking actress Tang Wei. "Right months," Lee said. "I had never spent so much effort on sex scenes." AP

Top of the Talk Shows

For those who missed last weekend's show (on talk, programs on TV, [and why we are unsure], if you are unsure), "When It Rains on Our Wedding" with Dawn Zulueta and Derek Ramsay [episode re-airs tomorrow, 6:30 p.m. on ABS-CBN] drawn 38% rating points, according to AGB Nielsen. The same day, "Maalaala Mo Kaya" with Kris Aquino and Jodi Sta. Maria [episode re-airs tomorrow, 10:30 p.m. on ABS-CBN] drawn 36% rating points, according to AGB Nielsen.

HUMA Herself

Gone: Boycott Olympics

SIDS VOSS—Richard Gere is pursuing his a boycott of the 2008 Beijing Olympics. Gere, 58, chair of the International Campaign for Tibet, told Reuters: "A general boycott is not certainly for today; it's probably temporal, but maybe early absolutely makes sense. Why should the world censure people who are obviously so bad to their own people, as bad to other people?"

Surprise!

• Joey de Leon noted if he was used at Willie Revillame: "Ako ang ipagsisilbi at gabi na, gabi-gabi, eh. Kung mapapansin niyo ...eh dinadaan ko sa biro ... dahil kilala naman ang eh. Nagsilat ako, lokohin ako ang pinagtatawan ng gabi." (Sino pa ba ang sasagot? Biruin ng bunda, please.)

• Joey de Leon on Willie Revillame's comments: "Hanang-hanga ang pagsilat gano, ha? Alam mo tanong nag kapalungan ka eh ... Ako dun sa't mga sinabi akong: 'Dalhin mo dun sa mental walang daya' ... Mag-react siya kasi! Ako ang isa lang ang maninigas sa kanyang mundo ... Iba siguro, iba yun, ako lang, ako lang maninigas ang tawa. Genuine ang galang, eh. Ramdam mo yun." ("Ngiti naman, walang sagutan.)

• ABS-CBN chair Gina dela Logan-de on the Willie-Joey spat: "Hahaha—ha ng mukha. Sayang kung dahil lang sa mga simpleng bagay na ganyan eh, mapupuli down tayo pero 'last long.' (Actually, not any, parang hindi just lang.)

• Willie Revillame after meeting with Lagman-De: "Napagusapan namin ng mga pinoy sa social networks kung ano ba ang pwede nating gawin para sa mga kapwa natin nasalanta ng kalamidad. ... Inuutusan ako ni Lani ... siyempre sa appeal at lahat na po nakakita nitong ... Para magmula sa ngayon, upon na ako." (Naawa! Ang bait-bait!)

• WEAKNESS na din siguro ibunting and the resulting sound-out: "Ang problema, dinaanan nila eh. Imadik nila 'yung aerospace ... Imadiglas nila dun. Ang Russian naman 'yung kumpanya ko. Nanandiyan 'yung tao eh, tinatrabaho nang maayos." (Hmmmm.)

CHARLIE Theron's on-the-wet-line at the Venice Film Festival. AFP

OPENING TODAY

Chapsuey

Stars: Pinky Pascual, Andrew del Rosario, Dimples Romana, Krista Kleiden

Directed by: Catherine Camarillo

After the sudden death of their parents, a Chinese-Filipino Pascual takes over the role of dad to his three spirited sisters. Pascual had worked with Camarillo on ABS-CBN shows. She said she some figure out on the job. The story was written by prize-winning Onay Asuncion. Shot on digital, the movie was blown up to 35mm film in Hong Kong.

Disturbia

Stars: Shia LaBeouf, Sarah Roemer, Carrie-Anne Moss, David Morse

Directed by: D.J. Caruso

A homebound teen voyeur (LaBeouf) suspects that his next-door neighbor (Morse) is a murderer. Says Peter Travers of Rolling Stone: "Schlock, suspense and flirty sex ... Cool movie." A.O. Scott of New York Times calls it an "adolescent Rear Window' ... more diverting than disturbing."

Day Watch

Stars: Konstantin Khabensky, Maria Poroshina, Vladimir Menshov, Galina Tyunina

Directed by: Timur Bekmambetov

A follow-up to the Russian hit "Night Watch." Peter Rainholt of San Francisco Chronicle says, "Not direct fun to original, with an overplethora of flashbacks, gimmicky and visual effects." Greg Kirschling of Entertainment Weekly thinks it's "a crackpot head trip."

Nancy Drew

Stars: Emma Roberts, Tim Donovan, Barry Bostwick, Josh Flitter

Directed by: Andrew Fleming

Julia Roberts' niece assumes the role of the teen sleuth, heroine of a series of books that first saw print 75 years ago. Lisa Lamanche of New York Post describes it as "a well-written ... pleasing update." Theodore Chronis of San Angeles Times contrary: "the most radical [Hark] this summer." Scott Rosebro of USA Today disagrees: "It suffers from the Hollywood cliches it half-heartedly tries to lampoon."

Shinealiers

Stars: Jhanis Bobis, Glen Bonoan, Shiena Mitra, Kim Gomez

Directed by: Jason Laso

A band of werewolves hunts down a half-breed boy who can provide the cure for their condition. Erick Jeremiah of Film Journal International crows: "It spoofs an old-fashioned B-movie charge." Joe Leydon of Variety dismisses it as "a tepid flatline ... likely [to] disappoint genre fans."

Gretchen almost failed to attend Ogie's bash

GRETCHEN BARRETTO ALMOST MISSED Ogie Alcasid's 40th birthday bash because her partners, Tirso Rojo Cruhuangco, was apprehended or about allowing her to attend the party.

"They felt like it was too soon for me to party after the recent controversy," Gwen explained. "He says, though, that going to the party of a dear friend like Ogie was a must for me. So he let me go just for an hour. It made me feel good to be there."

It only goes to show that, after the storm, Gretchen and Tirso's love has been intensified and their trust restored. That's the way it goes when a relationship is built on solid ground.

Nu issue

Judy Ann Santos-Agoncillo laughed off rumors that she's affected by the kissing scenes of her husband Michael Ejercito with Kathniel Maddi-ta "Kathniel."

"I'm not the jealous type. I have to understand that kissing for kissing lady is part of his job," she said. "Kissing scenes were never an issue between us."

Judy said she even gives some tips if she thinks a certain love scene of his seems awkward. Besides, a screen goddess like her has no reason to feel insecure at all.

Inside job

Bally Mae Quimbo is still in a state of wild shock after the burglars broke-in at her home. Estimated loss: a P2 million.

It must have been an inside job, considering how many jewelry is in the day village where Bally stays. She is grateful that some people are pointing at her mom (who's still reeling at press time) as the culprit, since she was reportedly soliciting money on the set of SOKorbet. Bally runs in Hong Kong.

"I provide for my mom and Bally is the direct line to easier to that. Whatever was the motivation else. Still looking for her. I hope people will spare my mom. No matter what, she's still my mother," Bally said.

She was is currently under medication for diabetes and so, sometimes, she does impulsive things. Bally knows that unlike many of his things, mother's isn't replaceable. As I always say, she loves things as life-saved things.

What's-a-wrong?

Bong Revilla's new show, "Kay's Amazing Stories," is clearly a spin-off of "Kapag Tumibok Ito Ulit." His own line is striking resemblance to the face of that show, Shaun Cotta.

DOLLY WOOD
Judy Annie Carrington

Although Bong has star power, his voice lacks authoritativeness in he makes his quick. Hence, his impact. It would be more interesting if the show would delve into local mumbling stories, with Bong translator in the action instead of just shooting a compilation of video clips from abroad.

Only then can the stories be really called Bong's own. Otherwise, what's so amazing about that?

Snow act

ABS-CBN Palestine Bida presents the newest singing sensation in the land, The Jewel Sisters. Orphaned at an early age and separated by fate, an unbelievable force will unite them to create four truly exotic together.

The youngest finally was forced to leave her sister Emerald in the orphanage when she was adopted by a gay reporter who goes by the name Kimberly Romero. The elder Sapphire lost her siblings to a calamity such as the name Bridget Jhanice, abuse and neglect to get, Emerald turned desperate till a tourist-ess took her in.

Watch the melodramatic twists and turns of their lives in "Tinipong Liwanag." Ken Brodjet, Bida Salvador and Sarah Geronimo (co-stars) this Jewel Sisters. Who's gonna combine release!

New album

Moonstar88 offers something new in its latest album under Sony BMG, "Baby Gender." What exactly could music group but their members drift apart, this group says its journey has grown further from being a mere music group to a family bonded with experiences on and off the road, in and out of the music scene.

Its album includes "Dalhousie," "Can't Stop," "Hilapusan," "Pasalamgin," plus the "Love" remake, "Bend."

Moonstar88's music is just right for cool listening under the moon and the stars.

Conviction

I am saddened by the news that Joey Marquez has been convicted of graft and corruption charges. Joey said he's a happy lady. He said it's been good boss. Yet he's was probably ill-advised during his term as Bataan governor.

Why doesn't the court also go after erring officials who are still in office? Are they getting a blind eye and making favor to the non-make of all the corrupt government officials around?

New endorser

TOMI's initial for Get-commendable years, Kathleen Hidilyn is now a proud Solo endorser. She succeeds the the classic Lipe Jar and Lisse tissue brand.

Isn't the wave of people who judge books-deals or facing nothing between the one?

"It's a stereotype that's not easy to erase. If nurses remember struggling upon at lunkheaded days. She important step into diversity as Ashley," she says. "But those who judge me may just be right. Deadma na lang ako ke Boss."

Enough! I get tying down to hot living-dead gorgeous always? "Today has a price but more than just vanity it's feeling confident that everyone."

And what does the country's tallest woman find irresistible as a guy? "Something over and super value-ready." All eyes are on Bataan now while some guys check their teeth in trays of hot.

Quarrels girl

Here's an e-mail from Quennie Tacandong: Hi but, published Tiffany who girl irked when her name was misspelled by another entry:

"Thank you so much for spelling my name right. I loved the article that you wrote.

I would love to do something with you one day.

Please let Gene Boateng know that I said she misses you, great. Quennie and I get very sick and we had to go back home together. Tiffany Grace"

Isn't artist

Catch Filipino international concert-stager Chris Hickins in "Romance Ala Jazz" at Tropical Bar 2/F Greenbelt 3 on Sept. 8, 11:30 p.m. (Call 0917-5269869). He was the first Filipino soloist on the Lost Boat Princess Cruises in the '90s, his Chris Hickins Trio was a hit. Love, will be in the air when he hits pianos in the talking.

Personal

Birthday hugs to my daughter Bianchi, big boo! and belated belat hug to mom and BFs.

E-mail: entertainment@inquirer.com.ph